

T *RANSPORTATION* **NEWS**

November/December 2002

Volume 28 Number 3

Focus on

Excellence



by **Mike Behrens**
Executive Director

I hope you are as interested as I am in this special double-issue of Transportation News. In focusing on excellence, we're featuring stories about many of the awards and recognitions that recently have come to this department and its people.

As they step forward to receive the praise for a job well done, we honor the excellence of those who represent all of us. Role models work among us.

There has been some talk recently about three areas that demand excellence of us all. These areas have been called the three Ts of TxDOT — safety, quality and accountability.

A lot has been said over the past several months and years about safety and quality. Attention to both is very important as this department strives to provide a vital, necessary service to our fellow Texans.

Accountability is equally important. We know that our actions affect the

Accountability — two sides of a 'coin'

perceptions of others. Because of this, we also understand it is important that we set and meet the highest standards of personal and professional conduct.

The people recognized in these pages of Transportation News have met those standards by which we live and work. Importantly, they have been perceived by others as meeting and surpassing those standards.

This is one side of the coin of accountability — the side that shines when we are called to answer for our actions when those actions are deemed excellent.

The other side of this "coin" is sadly familiar to us in this scandal-rich world. It rarely shines, but often comes under the spotlight of public scrutiny. This is the side we see when our actions are judged as less than expected, as failing to meet the standard for personal or professional conduct.

At TxDOT, we must pay attention to both sides of accountability. As we enjoy the achievements of the people recognized in these pages, we must be alert to the misdeeds of some that would darken our reputation for fair-dealing,

for honesty, for ethical public service.

If you have questions about accountability and its importance to this department, please see Chapter 8 of the TxDOT Human Resources Manual. That chapter describes how some actions by individuals may lead to unintended but adverse consequences.

The chapter covers sexual harassment, drunken driving, substance abuse, violence in the workplace, use of department property, conflict of interest, political activities, conduct that is prohibited, and the expectation for professional conduct.

If you have further questions, talk with your supervisor or your Human Resources officer.

Because we are public servants, each of us is accountable for our actions. We must stand ready to face questions about how well we represented this department and how well we served the public.

This special edition shows that TxDOT people represent the department well and serve the public well. They do so because they are willing to be accountable for all that they do, excellence included. ☼

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Beaumont rescue	3
TxDOT Roundup	6
E-mail overload	8
Truck Roadeo	10
Verbatim	11-13
Big 5 awards	14
Extra Mile Awards	18
Quality Awards	22-23
Project Awards	26
Letters	31
Service Awards	32-33

Letter from the editor

The first thing we hope you noticed about this month's Transportation News is that there is no picture on the cover. With this combined November-December issue, we wanted to focus on excellence — so for the cover, graphic designer Buddy Allison decided to literally focus on the word excellence.

With the exception of an interesting article on how to cope with an overflow-

ing e-mail inbox and our regular features, most of this issue is devoted to stories about TxDOT employees whose excellence has netted them district, state or national recognition.

Thanks to everyone who responded to our call for stories or story ideas. We didn't have enough space, even with this

■ See Editor, Page 34



Transportation News is published by the
TxDOT Public Information Office
125 E. 11th, Austin, TX 78701-2483
Phone: (512) 463-8588
Circulation: 18,793

Texas Department of Transportation

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Printed by TxDOT, General Services Division

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Beaumont's Clopton rescues woman

by Marc Shepherd
Beaumont District

The first wave swept over the elderly woman twisting and turning her in every direction. The wall of water moved with such force it even engulfed a car parked next to the water's edge.

When the water receded, the woman had disappeared. For nearly a half minute, all that surfaced was a white foam of salt water mixed with sediment from the river bottom.

Suddenly a hand shot to the surface, but only a hand. A tangled web of submerged tree limbs and roots had wrapped themselves around her foot. She was trapped. No matter how hard she tried to reach the surface for air, what seemed like an invisible force was pulling her under, refusing her one more breath. Time was running out.

Port Arthur maintenance technician Billy Clopton was hauling materials for some shoulder work along State Highway 87 near Sabine Pass on May 23. It's routine work along the Intracoastal Waterway, where the wake of large ships constantly pounds the road's edge.

Just down the road, an older woman and her adult granddaughter were fishing along the river's bank. Clopton, watching the tanker and its unusually large wall of water move down the bank gaining speed, happened to glance up the road.

"I saw the ladies, their car, and was thinking something just wasn't right here," said Clopton.

The tanker's wake continued to build, pushing its way through chunks of concrete lining the water's edge. Nothing stood between it and the two women.

"All of a sudden it went up and across the car," said Clopton. "The water went so high it engulfed the old woman. She just disappeared."

Clopton could see her hand desperately trying to grab something to hold on to. He ran through the trees, grabbed her hand, and tried to pull her out. All Clopton could manage was to get her head above the surface.

"She started holding my hand like a



Billy Clopton, Port Arthur maintenance technician, never learned the name of the woman he helped save, but was glad he was there to help.

TxDOT photo / Marc Shephard

little child," he says. "I had to go in on blind faith."

And things were about to get worse.

Unknown to them, a second wave from the tanker was racing along the banks of the waterway. Seeing the approaching wave, Clopton knew he was out of options. All he could do was hold the woman's head above the water and hope the wave would quickly pass.

"We just looked at each other," said Clopton. "She stiffened up and was scared to death. I told her to hold on. 'We're going to make it, we're going to make it.'"

The second wave hit with no mercy, pushing them under water.

As Clopton worked to get the woman

above the choppy waters, Port Arthur maintenance employee Jon Clark called for help. Another maintenance employee, Pat Letulle, jumped in the water, helped Clopton untangle the trapped woman, and pulled her to the shore.

As paramedics arrived, Clopton and Letulle each took a deep breath. Drenched, they helped emergency workers, then sat on the rocks to rest. It was finally over. Meanwhile, the woman began the frantic search for her granddaughter. "Where's my baby? Where's my Angel?"

Fortunately, the granddaughter was safe. She had managed to get out of the path of the approaching wave just in time.

Clopton never did find out the name of the woman he rescued. To him it doesn't matter. What is important is he was there at the right time.

A 28-year employee with the district, Clopton says it's of no consequence to him how he came to be at the water's edge that day. He's just happy he was there.

"I feel wonderful," he said. "It was an honor to represent TxDOT like that. A pure honor." ☼

Regional mobility authority established for Central Texas

The Texas Transportation Commission has approved the state's first regional mobility authority — a new funding mechanism to speed needed transportation projects.

"This is a milestone in Texas transportation history," said chairman John W. Johnson. "Regional mobility authorities offer a new way to expeditiously deliver critical transportation improvements to Texans."

The commission approved the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority, which proposes to develop a new 12-mile turnpike in Williamson County.

"With the congestion problems facing Central Texas today, it is appropriate this region be the first in the state to establish a mobility authority," said

State Rep. Mike Krusee. "The Central Texas mobility authority will benefit this region by reducing congestion, increasing local control over transportation planning and generating revenue for additional transportation needs."

As its initial project, the authority intends to develop U.S. 183-A, a reliever route to U.S. 183 in the area of Cedar Park and Leander.

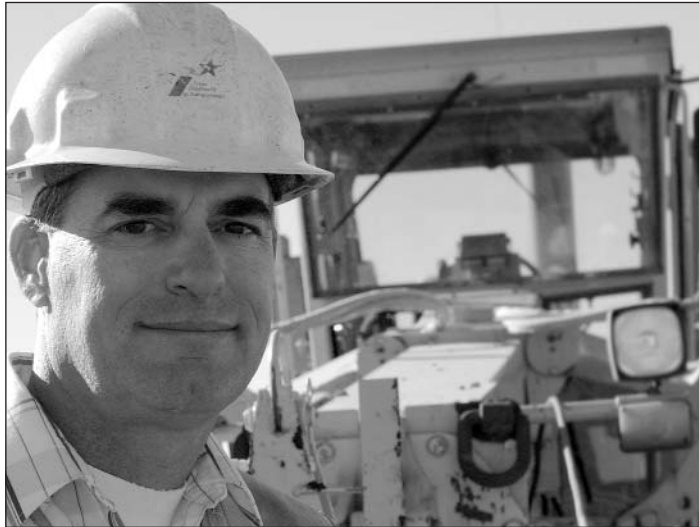
Among its initial actions, the authority will develop a financial plan for the proposed project.

A seven-member board will oversee the Central Texas Regional Mobility Authority, which includes three members appointed by each county and a chairperson appointed by the governor. ☼

Amarillo employee saves money, reduces risk, earns award

Robert Hollingsworth next to his money-saving skid box and blade attachment.

TxDOT photo / Tonya Detten



by Tonya Detten

Amarillo District Public Information Office

It seems to come easy to Robert Hollingsworth, a 19-year veteran of the Panhandle Maintenance Section. If a problem threatens to get in his way, he just thinks about it for a minute, looks at it from all angles, and builds something.

He designed and built a skid box and blade attachment that has been documented as saving the state \$433,796 in one year. Because of that, the Texas Incentive and Productivity Commission honored Hollingsworth with \$5,000 through the State Employee Incentive Program.

The TxDOT worker is humble about his accomplishment. "I just kept thinking, there's got to be an easier

way to lay hot mix," Hollingsworth says. "I was tired of wasting hot mix and watching my friends and co-workers perform risky operations. I built stuff on the farm all the time so I thought I could solve the problem by building something."

In his eyes, the problem was caused by the fact that the truck driver dumping a load of hot mix on the highway couldn't see because the dump was in his way. An extra employee helped direct the driver to hook up to a drag box. Hollingsworth always worried he or one of his co-workers would get a hand injury while performing this operation. He also worried that the employee who controlled the drag box behind the moving truck could get injured.

Hollingsworth's solution was a skid

box and blade attachment that hooks onto the motor grader and is all controlled from the tractor's cab. "The major difference between my machine and the way we used to do it," said Hollingsworth, "is that the motor grader controls everything. The truck is hooked to the motor grader so the motor grader actually pushes the truck. It gives total control to one person."

The motor grader accessory has been featured in the Innovations Showcase at the Maintenance Conference. "The motor grader attachments do a great job of mimicking the asphalt placement of an expensive laydown machine," said Mike Taylor, Amarillo District's director of operations. "It has the potential to change the way hot mix is placed industry wide."

Hollingsworth was honored for his innovation at the Governor's Mansion in November. In addition to thinking outside the box, Hollingsworth takes pride in his work for TxDOT. He has been a safe operator for 19 years and has competed in the statewide truck rodeo three different times.

At the presentation event at the Governor's Mansion, TxDOT received the productivity commission's Highest Dollars Certified award among large state agencies for achieving the most savings for a given fiscal year. Also, Curtis Reinert of the TxDOT General Services Division received the Evaluator of the Year Award. ☼

TxDOT's Cathy Williams receives recognition from Gov. Perry

Cathy J. Williams, TxDOT assistant executive director for support operations, received the 2002 Outstanding Women in Government Award presented by Gov. Rick Perry.

Winning in the category for outstanding professional development, she was recognized for demonstrating professional growth by outstanding progress in her field. She was one of seven to receive the honor, presented Nov. 1 at the Governor's Mansion.

Williams began her career with

TxDOT in 1973 as a switchboard operator in the Paris District. She then went on to put herself through college. She earned a bachelor's degree in personnel and human resources management, then a master's in business administration. Later, she achieved professional certification in the human resources career field.

Williams is one of the four directors of TxDOT who serve as the department's chief administrators. She helps oversee 14,700 employees, countless

other contracted workers, and the agency's annual budget of \$5.1 billion.

Her specific responsibilities include overseeing most of TxDOT's non-engineering areas, including nine divisions and offices: Human Resources, General Services and



Cathy J. Williams

■ See Williams, Page 9

Transportation Digest

★ **Turnpike 'Texas-sized':** When Gov. Rick Perry announced on Aug. 29 that State Highway 130, SH 45, and the Loop 1 (MoPac) extension were moving forward due to a \$2.2 billion bond sale, he described this new Central Texas Turnpike system as "the single largest construction project in the nation." The bond market is seeing a 40-year low in interest rates, so the state managed to borrow the money at 5.4 percent interest. Latest toll estimate for the roads was about 12 cents per mile, the governor said. (*The Lone Star Report*)

★ **Enviro reviews to speed up:** Interstate 69 is one of seven transportation projects across the country, and the first in Texas, that will see environmental reviews speeded up. The U.S. Department of Transportation announcement follows President Bush's Sept. 18 executive order about environmental stewardship. The proposed highway would connect the Rio Grande Valley to the interstate highway system. Work has continued on U.S. 281 in Hidalgo County and on U.S. 77 in Cameron and Willacy counties, even though the federal government has not funded improvements that would bring both highways up to interstate standards. The Rio Grande Valley is believed to be the largest U.S. metro area not connected to the interstate highway system. Regional leaders have made I-69 one of their priorities as population growth and free trade lead to roadway congestion. (*McAllen Monitor*)

★ **Safety in numbers:** While the number of vehicle-miles driven rises, the number of accidents has not been going up at the same rate. Some key numbers have fallen. Accident rates per 100 million miles driven have declined. The National Highway Transportation Safety Administration says there were 6.4 million vehicle crashes in 2000. That's about 17,500 per day (or an accident every five seconds). Of these, only two-thirds of

one percent involved fatalities.

More numbers: Vehicle-miles traveled rose by nearly 29 percent in the decade 1990-2000. The number of vehicles registered rose by 17 percent and population grew by almost 13 percent. During that time, the number of fatal accidents fell 3.2 percent. The number of people killed in traffic accidents declined even more, by 6.3 percent.

Among passenger cars, the accident rate per 100 million miles driven, the rate decline was 25.8 percent. For large trucks, it was 15.6 percent. For small trucks (including sport utility vehicles), the decline was 4.9 percent. Overall decline: 21.5 percent.

Reasons for such good news include improvements in road design, less use of alcohol by automobile drivers, greater use of seatbelts, increases in the number of police assigned to manage traffic, slower traffic due to increased congestion, and greater use of traffic management centers and intelligent transportation systems. (*Governing*)

★ **Arkansas urges caution:**

The interstate highway system in Arkansas is a tangled snare of barrels and concrete barriers. Truckers have consistently voted the Arkansas interstates as among the worst in the country. Rehabilitation is under way big time.

Describing work on I-30 and I-40, a representative for the Arkansas transportation department said, "This is probably the largest rehabilitation program going on in the nation." It's also one of the most dangerous. More than 70 people have died in traffic accidents in or near work zones on Arkansas interstates since the program began in 1999. The state's transportation department has been making an extra effort to inform motorists about the work areas, traffic slowdowns and delays. In 1975, Arkansas was the first state to complete its original allotment of interstate highway miles, meaning that Arkansas has some of the oldest

interstates in the country. Total cost for the rehabilitation is estimated at \$785 million. Completion target: 2005. (*Dallas Morning News*)

★ **Segway rolls:** Much has been written about the Segway human transporter — mostly about whether it is an updated motorized scooter or a revolution in transportation. Unveiled on national TV last December, it won't be available to the public until sometime next year. The Segway weighs in at 69 pounds and allows a person to stand upright and travel at speeds up to 12 miles per hour. Backers see several benefits to the device: reduced air pollution and accessible transportation for the elderly and the disabled. So far, serious use of the machines has been limited to places such as warehouses, post offices and police departments. Concern is rising over their use on sidewalks and other public areas, especially in congested settings where collisions could occur. (*Governing*)

★ **Glaring problem:** Most people upset about headlight glare blame high-intensity-discharge (HID) headlights, according to an analysis of complaints in government files. About two-thirds of the comments from individuals oppose HID lights, also known as xenon lights. Many say they should be prohibited. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has been collecting the complaints over the last year. More than 3,800 complaints were on file in mid-July. Nevertheless, an agency official says more study is needed to determine whether the headlights are an annoyance or whether they "really affect safety." HID lights have been on European roads many years, but only now are becoming common in the United States. Some drivers like the lights, saying they light parts of the road better and their blue color is distinctive. (*USA Today*)



PUBLIC EYES TRANSPORTATION PLAN

TxDOT in recent weeks has sponsored a series of public meetings on the statewide transportation plan, including a rail system proposal as a component. The meetings were held in 17 cities across the state Oct. 28 - Nov. 21.

The Texas Transportation Plan, updated every five years, is the blueprint for a multimodal, statewide transportation system. Citizens are able to review the plan and express their vision for transportation in Texas.

The plan includes various modes of transportation, including highway, rail, public transportation, aviation, waterways, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, pipeline, telecommunications and information technology.

Updating the plan provides the framework to develop an effective and efficient transportation system that will keep Texas moving.

The meetings followed the format of an informal open house (3-8 p.m.) with presentations given at 7 p.m.

Meetings were scheduled in El Paso, Amarillo, Corpus Christi, Austin, Midland/Odessa, Lubbock, Laredo, Bryan/College Station, San Antonio, Weslaco, Arlington, San Angelo, Houston, Abilene, Beaumont, Tyler and Lufkin.

Michelle Conkle of the TxDOT Transportation Planning and Programming Division has more information at (512) 486-5023.

TECH PUBLICATIONS ONLINE

The Construction Division has introduced "Technical Publications" as a new page to its intranet site. The page links to three Materials and Pavements Section Web pages: "Construction and Materials Tips Newsletters," "Technical Advisories," and "From Other DOTs." The page describes the contents and schedule of each publication. The subject page lists the date and topics of each issue.

"Construction and Materials Tips Newsletters" are two-page publications with data from the Bridge and Construction divisions. They are issued on the last working day of each quarter. Each newsletter contains articles dealing with policy, provides answers to questions raised from districts, offers comments about new or revised specifications, raises key points about field performance or warranty issues, and gives contact information.

"Technical Advisories" are posted as situations arise, focus on one subject, and discuss a problem or new research, procedures or technologies.

"From Other DOTs" will contain complete, unedited files of various technical publications provided by other states transportation departments.

TREASURY CITES FOUR DISTRICTS

Four TxDOT districts have received the U.S. Treasury Department's Patriotic Service Certificate due to significant increases in enrollments by employees for U.S. savings bonds. The cited districts: Austin, Dallas, Houston, and Laredo.

BRIDGE ENHANCEMENTS SET

TxDOT has confirmed the Queen Isabella Causeway will receive added fortification and a warning system. TxDOT District Engineer Mario Jorge said \$10 million next year would go to improving the bridge's protection and to installing a system to alert drivers if the causeway was damaged. Purpose: make the bridge less vulnerable to collisions since the accident of Sept. 15, 2001, when eight motorists died after an off-course tugboat struck the state's longest bridge, causing sections of the roadway to fall away.

Besides a warning system, there will be a series of concrete barrier "dolphins" placed under the causeway that could take the striking force of a towboat and barges. ★

SOFTBALL PLAYS IN AUSTIN

With the heat more moderate than last year's triple-digit temperatures, TxDOT employees and family members participated in the 14th annual statewide TxDOT Softball Tournament in Austin Sept. 28. Teams traveled from as far as Denton, Sweetwater and Carrizo Springs to play in the event.

The Carrizo Springs Area and Maintenance Office team (Laredo District) took the men's division championship in an exciting finish in the final game 15-14 over Texas Thunder (Houston District). The Mudhens (San Antonio District) placed third.

Playing three games in a four-hour stretch, the co-rec division completed play with a single-elimination tournament. The undefeated record of the Quality Assurers (Construction Division) gave the team the championship, with Denton Maintenance (Dallas District) as runner-up.

Men's most-valuable-player recognition went to Carrizo Springs' Lou Franco. The honor of best defensive player went to Texas Thunder's Ricky Henderson.

The co-rec MVP award went to Steve Smith (from the Bridge Division), playing for the Quality Assurers.

In the spirit of team play, the honor for best defense went to all players on the Denton team.

Men's all-tournament selections were Carrizo Springs' Ramon Rodriguez, Brian Perez, Abel Galvan, Oscar Mendoza, J.D. Moreno and Nacho Mata; Texas Thunder's Dana Cote, Chuck Southerland, Anthony Sheranko, and Jerry Lawrence; and Mudhens' Tom Beeman (of the Traffic Operations Division) and Rudy Medellin.

Co-rec all-tournament selections were Quality Assurers' Lisa Lukefahr and Audrey Wolf and Denton's T.K. Plank.

Next year's tournament is scheduled for June 21-22, 2003, at the Havins Softball Complex in North Austin. Austin District's Ed Collins has more information at (512) 832-7041.



■ **Randy C. Hopmann, P.E.**, has been appointed district engineer for the Lubbock District effective Nov. 1. He fills the position formerly held by Carl Utley who retired Aug. 31. Prior to this appointment, Hopmann was director of transportation planning and development in the Tyler District, a post he held since November 1996.

He began his TxDOT career in January 1985 as an engineering assistant in the Austin District. Prior to his appointment in the Tyler District, he held a variety of positions in design engineering in the Austin District. These included design team leader, assistant engineer of special design, and engineer of special design.

He earned a bachelor of science degree in civil engineering from Texas A&M University in 1984. He attained his license as a professional engineer in 1990. Among his achievements in the Tyler District, he directed development of ProTrack, a user-friendly computer-based system to track the progress of projects. Also, Hopmann has been active with TxDOT's research program, serving most recently as chairman of the Technical Advisory Panel for Research Management Committee 2 — Transportation Planning.

Hopmann and his wife Jackie have two children, Kimberly and Bradly, and two grandchildren. He has been active in his community as a board member of Leadership Tyler and as a volunteer with various civic organizations.

■ **Mark A. Marek, P.E.**, has been selected deputy director for the TxDOT Design Division. He is a 1981 graduate of the University of Texas with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering. He received his master's degree in business administration from Southwest Texas State University in 1986. Marek joined the TxDOT Design Division in 1981 and has worked in several capacities within the division. He is a member of the Task Force on Geometric Design and the Task Force on Roadway Safety, both part of the

American Association of Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). He has served on numerous national committees and research panels. He was awarded the Texas Transportation Institute Gibb Gilchrist Award in 1992, AASHTO Design Award in 1994 and again in 2002. He has been involved in the development of the AASHTO Green Book and is recognized nationally as an expert in the field of highway design.

■ **Charles W. Russell, P.E.** has been appointed director of maintenance in the Atlanta District. He began his career with TxDOT in the Atlanta District as a summer employee where he worked for five summers. He graduated from Texas A&M University with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering in December 1989 and was hired January 1990 in the Atlanta Area Office as an engineering assistant. He was selected to participate in TxDOT's Master of Science Program in January 1993. He returned to Texas A&M and completed master's degree in civil engineering in May 1994. He received his engineering license in February 1995. Since June 1994, he has served as maintenance engineer in the Atlanta District Maintenance Office. In April 2000, he was named district bridge engineer. He also serves as adviser to the Atlanta District's Young Engineer Group.

■ **Woody Raine, P.E.**, has been appointed as the TxDOT recycling manager with the General Services Division. With more than 20 years of experience in the recycling field, he most recently worked at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (formerly the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission). Raine has held the titles of recycling market specialist, community recycling team leader, and recycling section manager over the past nine years at that agency. Prior to that, he served as the recycling engineer at the Texas Department of Health. Also, he

worked at the City of Austin, planning and managing the curbside recycling program, and was the operations manager for Ecology Action, a non-profit recycling center in Austin.

■ **Cody McKenney** has been appointed Fort Bend maintenance supervisor in the Houston District. Working in the Fort Bend Maintenance Office, he has held positions as maintenance technician, inspector, contract administrator and contract specialist. He began working with TxDOT in 1994.

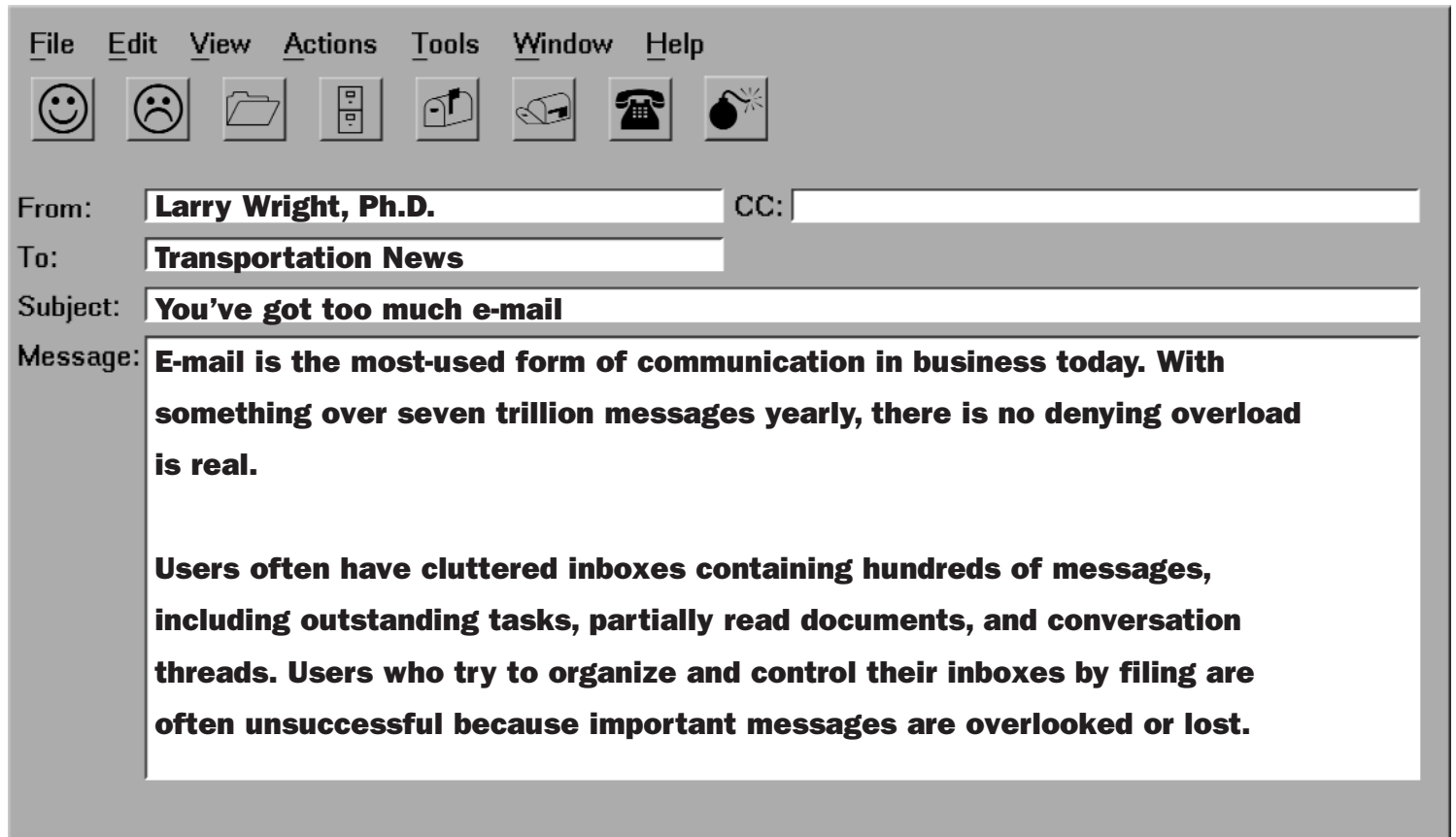
■ **Darrel Hunt**, former deputy director for the TxDOT Vehicle Titles and Registration Division (VTR), has been selected as a distinguished jurisdictional member by the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators. Hunt retired from TxDOT on Aug. 31.

The award was presented at the association's conference in Saskatoon, Canada. The association represents state and provincial officials in the United States and Canada who administer and enforce motor vehicle laws. The award recognizes a person who has made outstanding contributions at the national and international levels of motor vehicle administration or law enforcement.

Hunt had worked in the VTR division for more than 31 years. He was instrumental in solving several issues relating to commercial trucking along the Texas-Mexico border. He worked to develop and improve border-crossing operations for commercial and private vehicles. He also developed and implemented policies and procedures for Mexican trucking companies operating in Texas.

"The broad expertise that Darrel Hunt has in the complex arena of vehicle titles and registration can only come from years of hands-on experience," said Michael Behrens, TxDOT's executive director. "We value Darrel's contributions and it is gratifying that the international community recognizes them as well." ★

Coping with e-mail overload



A typical inbox contains four types of entries:

- Junk or spam
- Information or messages not requiring a response
- Correspondence
- Tasks

Ideally, the junk would be immediately deleted. Ideally, the information or messages would be read, then either deleted or filed. Ideally, the correspondence would be answered, then deleted or filed. Ideally the tasks would be accomplished and then either deleted or filed. But we live in the real world, and it doesn't work that way.

In real mailboxes, fresh incoming messages typically represent substantially less than half of the entries.

Information or messages account for 21 percent of the inbox. Correspondence accounts for 12 percent, with tasks or to-do lists taking the remaining space. Some messages are long and complex, and will take time and effort to read and digest. These messages remain in the box partially read or unread. Some are almost immediately useful, and so they are left in the inbox for accessibility. Some are indeterminate: they defy classification and remain in the inbox as a matter of indecision, or their value depends on events yet to occur.

Two solutions present themselves. One is filtering, the other is automatic filing. Much has been written about filtering, and there are some useful and effective filing programs. The problem with filtering is that, the better the program, the greater the likelihood that important stuff won't get through to you.

The problem with automatic filing:

- Creating and maintaining folders requires considerable effort.
- Successful filing depends largely on the user being able to correctly imagine future retrieval requirements.
- Users want to postpone judgment to determine value of information. They don't want to archive information that later turns out to be irrelevant or useless.
- Resulting files may be of little use in message retrieval. Users fear they won't remember where they've filed information. This is especially a problem when users had created large numbers of folders, when folders are too small, when folders are too big, and when duplicate folders are created.
- Filing information makes it less accessible to serve as a reminder when it is removed from the immediate view of the inbox. ☹

Larry Wright is on the faculty of the University of Texas McCombs School of Business. He teaches business communication and did this research at the request of the Executive Education Office's masters in business administration program.

E-mail overload proves expensive

It is easy to become a slave to your e-mail. But there is hope.

Nearly 2,000 years ago, the Roman philosopher Seneca wrote, "What is the use of having countless books and libraries, whose owners can scarcely read through in a whole lifetime?"

The learner is not instructed but burdened by the mass of them, and it is much better to surrender yourself to a few authors than to wander through many."

Some points to consider:

- Businesses are churning out communication faster than their employees can consume them.
- Research shows that just 13 percent of U.S. and European companies know how much time their staffs spend on digesting their own communication.
- That means 87 percent don't have a clue.

Industry figures suggest that 60-80 percent of the information employees receive is not understood and that, as a result, billions of dollars are lost. ★

—Larry Wright

What Bill Gates says about e-mail

If you wanted to know more about what e-mail is good for and what it's not, who better to ask than Bill Gates, described in the *Harvard Management Letter* as "maybe the most prolific e-mailer."

A writer working on an article for *The New Yorker* on Microsoft's problems with the Justice Department wrote Gates an e-mail about e-mail. The writer asked:

Q: What kinds of understanding of another person can e-mail give you?

Q: What do you think is unique about e-mail as a form of communication?

An e-mail reply came from Gates about 18 minutes later:

"E-mail is a unique communication vehicle for a lot of reasons. However e-mail is not a substitute for direct interaction.

"There are people who I have corresponded with on e-mail for months before actually meeting them — people at work and otherwise. If someone isn't saying something of interest, it's easier to not respond to their mail than it is to not answer the phone.

"In fact, I give out my home phone to almost no one but my

e-mail address is known very broadly....

"I am the only person who reads my e-mail so no one has to worry about embarrassing themselves or going around people when they send a message....

"E-mail helps out with other types of communication. It allows you to exchange a lot of information in advance of a meeting and make the meeting far more valuable....

"Email is not a good way to get mad at someone, since you can't interact. You can send friendly messages very easily, since they are harder to misinterpret."

We can draw some conclusions:

- E-mail lacks finality. It is part of an ongoing conversation.
- E-mail is less intrusive than a phone call because the recipient can choose when or even if to respond.
- E-mail can circumvent the hierarchy.
- E-mail is an efficient way to exchange information.
- E-mail is not an efficient way to deal with emotion.

Williams receives Outstanding Women in Government Award

Continued from Page 4

Purchasing, Finance, Occupational Safety, Travel, Public Information, Contract Services, Civil Rights and Information Systems.

"I provide balance and a different perspective," said Williams of her role at TxDOT. "I ensure the whole spectrum is given importance, including the agency's support functions. It actually works well. Even though we each have special areas we work with, we all are available to help in any area, and we work together on a variety of issues that affect TxDOT."

Williams is a governor's appointee

to the Texas Council on Purchasing from People with Disabilities. She is a past member of the Governor's Commission for Women and is a present member of Executive Women in Texas Government. She also serves on the State Agency Coordinating Council as the TxDOT representative making recommendations to the governor's office and the legislature on issues related to human resources, purchasing and other support functions. Williams is a member of the Austin Kiwanis Club.

"I have never seen my growth in a predominantly male-engineer environment as career-blocking," she says. "It

has been a challenge sometimes. But if you work hard and build trust, people know they can count on you. It's important to be fair, up front, and respectful. Being responsive has helped my career."

Outstanding Women in Government awards were presented in six other categories: contributions to other women in state government, management, leadership, community involvement, customer service, and pioneer spirit.

The State Agency Council to the Governor's Commission for Women established the award in 1983 to recognize women in state government for exceptional achievements and service to the state of Texas. ★

Rodeo challenges drivers

by **Bob Colwell**
Bryan District

Participants in the State Truck Rodeo Championship are listed by TxDOT district and name. **Lee Dhone** from Lufkin District earned the top score. **Dennis Behrends** of the Austin District was runner-up. Competitions in each of the TxDOT districts determined who would take part in the state competition.

- ★ **Abilene:** Chico Ruiz, Kevin Wright
- ★ **Amarillo:** Robert Hollingsworth, Roy Deeds
- ★ **Atlanta:** Brently Harris, Keith Green
- ★ **Austin:** Dennis Behrends, Logan Ketron
- ★ **Beaumont:** Bobby Akehurst, James Strong
- ★ **Brownwood:** James Moss, Mike Ramon
- ★ **Bryan:** A.C. LaSalle, Chad Clossin
- ★ **Childress:** Monte Elliott, Ricky Pruitt
- ★ **Corpus Christi:** John Jacobs, Ruben Salazar
- ★ **Dallas:** Lance Henderson, Sheldon Clagg
- ★ **El Paso:** Javier Castillo, Rolando Hernandez
- ★ **Fort Worth:** Don Stanley, Ronny Lehrmann
- ★ **Houston:** Chris Patterson, Mark Kroll
- ★ **Laredo:** Eloy Zertuche, Jose Esparza
- ★ **Lubbock:** Mark Flores, Oscar Valdez
- ★ **Lufkin:** Joe Oliver, Lee Dhone
- ★ **Odessa:** Danny Webb, Jorge Estrada
- ★ **Paris:** Chuck Crossland, Kent Hall
- ★ **Pharr:** Edelmiro "Miro" Perez, Hector Carreon
- ★ **San Angelo:** Gary Maricle, Waylan Ensor
- ★ **San Antonio:** Ray Lerma, Robert Hartman
- ★ **Tyler:** Mike Baker, Thurber DeFreece
- ★ **Waco:** David Mitchell, Lenny Lenart
- ★ **Wichita Falls:** Cory Holzer, Wayne Horton
- ★ **Yoakum:** Dwayne Malatek, Robert Jiral

BRYAN — TxDOT's top 50 truck drivers gathered on Halloween Day to show off their skillful driving tricks and to enjoy the treats of competition at the tenth annual TxDOT State Truck Rodeo Championship.

The top two drivers from each of the department's 25 districts gathered at the Brazos Center in the Bryan District for the event. The competition — to sharpen drivers' skills — was friendly but intense as each driver inspected equipment and negotiated six obstacle courses.

Lee Dhone of the Lufkin District finished with the top score. Dennis Behrends of the Austin District was first runner-up. Both will represent TxDOT at the National Truck Rodeo Competition in New York early next year.

Jerral Wyer, with the TxDOT Occupational Safety Division, summarized the event: "All you have to do is just watch to know that we have a quality group of intense drivers here."

These are serious individuals that are the heart and soul of the department's safety program, and it shows."

During the Nov. 1 awards ceremony, Bryan District Engineer Lonny Traweek praised the competitors. "Your presence here today indicates that you exemplify the safety awareness that says you are the best in Texas," he said.

Paul Lewis, safety coordinator for the Tyler District, presented the Jerry Wooldridge Award to Steven "Goober" Mitchell of the Abilene District. TxDOT safety coordinators present this award to a TxDOT driver who most exemplifies the highest level of enthusiasm, spirit of cooperation, and professionalism.

Wooldridge, the award's namesake, was a key mover in the state rodeo competition becoming a departmental practice. Wooldridge was a safety coordinator for the Fort Worth District who died in 1997 after 22 years with TxDOT.

The San Antonio District will host next year's State Truck Rodeo Championship. ★

Program offers bonuses for vehicle safety

Through the Occupational Safety Division, TxDOT has announced the six districts winning budget bonuses in the latest round of awards recognizing achievement in the safe use of department vehicles.

The program is based on a yearly contest ending April 30 that measures third-party automobile liability claims and losses of each of the TxDOT districts.

The calculated ratio of the losses against the allocated premium is used as the basis for the awards. Districts with the six lowest loss ratios receive an allocation of funds added to their respective operating maintenance budgets. The award amount is added to the winning districts' maintenance budget for the next fiscal year.

Here are the latest winners:

First place: \$400,000 to the Childress District for a 0 percent loss ratio. Safety coordinator: Carolyn Carrick.

Second: \$200,000 to the Brownwood District for a 0.02 percent loss ratio. Safety coordinator: Jerry Johnson.

Third: \$150,000 to the Bryan District for a 2.08 percent loss ratio. Safety coordinator: Keri Brown.

Fourth: \$125,000 to the Wichita Falls District for a 5.99 percent loss ratio. Safety coordinator: Jess Wood.

Fifth: \$75,000 to the Odessa District for a 14.64 percent loss ratio. Safety coordinator: Clemente Villa.

Sixth: \$50,000 to the Abilene District for a 15.65 percent loss ratio. Safety coordinator: Steve Batko. ★

Verbatim: A challenge to achieve



Executive Director Mike Behrens spoke during the 76th annual Transportation Short Course about the opportunities facing TxDOT. The following remarks are taken from his speech at the opening session on Oct. 22.

Public perceptions: If [most motorists] take our system for granted because they are so satisfied with it they never have to think about it, that's OK. But I fear many take it for granted because they don't fully realize what it has taken to plan, design, build, maintain and operate a transportation system to serve a state like Texas.

Safety: Many people don't know that in Texas, even though vehicle miles traveled since 1980 increased by 107 percent, the fatality rate decreased by nearly 63 percent. Let me quickly add that while that downward trend is good, we have a lot of work to do. We never can be satisfied until there are zero fatalities on our highways.

Work: All of the TxDOT folks ... do a good job every day in providing for the transportation needs of Texas. I know that.

Quality: Quality of work is very important. It always has been. But it is probably more important now than ever before.

Commissioners: We are fortunate to have a strong commission that supports our work to provide safe, effective, and reliable transportation systems in Texas. Commission members are focused on progress, on results, on excellence. And they are focused on the future.

Accountability: We must continue to set high standards for honesty, for fair-dealing, for quality. I encourage each of

you to continue to put your best foot forward in performing your job at TxDOT.

Pride: I am so proud to be a part of the TxDOT family, to work with people who serve the public and take care of each other.

Listening: Be a good listener with those you deal with. I hope that you will be able to respond to them with an answer that is friendly and helpful.

Communicating: It was said last year at Short Course that we need to communicate in simple terms, in terms that are meaningful to people. We need to communicate about the things we have done and are doing well. We need to communicate about the things we can do better.

Some specifics: What are the things we need to communicate about? Let's start with these:

- our commitment to preserve and rehabilitate the current system.
- our work to improve safety.
- what we are doing to increase mobility in our major cities.
- the importance of re-authorization of the Federal highway bill.
- the need for funding the Texas Mobility Fund.
- the future of transportation in Texas and the benefits of regional mobility authorities,
- toll equity, and the Trans Texas Corridor ★

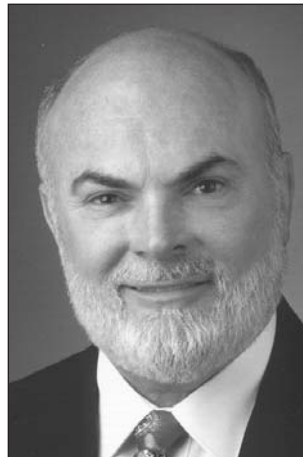
Verbatim: Commissioners' Short Course remarks

During the opening session of the 76th annual Transportation Short Course in late October, each member of the Texas Transportation Commission shared his views on matters of interest to TxDOT employees.



John Johnson
Commission Chair

In real estate circles, there is a catchy phrase: "Location. Location. Location." In most other matters, it should be "Communicate. Communicate. Communicate."



Robert Nichols
Commission member

"This state has an incredible amount of resources to draw upon, and when it rolls up its sleeves amazing things can happen."

Solutions: Engineers thrive on solving problems. Elected officials thrive on fulfilling needs. Communities thrive on mobility and connectivity. The future economic vitality and quality of life in our state depends upon it.

Maintenance: I understand that the roads with the highest volumes and weights will have the most wear, but it isn't right that the roads with



Ric Williamson
Commission member

"I asked you in my remarks last year ... to think big, to plan large, and to execute huge. ... I asked you to focus on risk and not be afraid of risk, and to think about results and not the process of what you do. ... We now have the tools to take a risk. We now have the legislative and administrative tool kit to finance some of our projects in a more innovative way."

Success: The department, I've found in the year and a half I've been part of the commission, is successful because of its retirees, because of its active employees, because of its private-sector partners, and because of people that contribute either professionally or voluntarily. ... Certainly each of you falls into one of those categories and we appreciate your contributions.

Concerns: Let's examine a poll taken recently citing the citizenry's main concerns. ... Number one on this list was congestion and mobility. ...

Over any given period of time, the movement of people, goods and services is always on people's minds. It might be dislodged temporarily by a phenomenon of that instant, but it will always be at or near the top.

Customers: What is important in the view of our customers, the users of the

system? I have mentioned on several occasions that a blue-ribbon work group that I commissioned found that mobility, safety, maintenance of the system, project delivery, and economic vitality were uppermost in Texas minds. We need to address these every day.

Communication: Great leaders have the ability to communicate. Everyone hates surprises. So, in that context, we need to let people know what is going

on. Whether it is the deliberations for a new project or the publishing of construction or maintenance work schedules at a given location, people do not want to be inconvenienced by something that they didn't know about.

In real estate circles, there is a catchy phrase: "Location. Location. Location." In most other matters, it should be "Communicate. Communicate. Communicate." ☆

the most people dependent on them should be in the worst shape. I hope that will be corrected over the next few years.

Toll roads: Our districts, as well as some of our divisions, need to review our larger mobility projects for tolling opportunity. It's hard to believe that this time last year it was constitutionally prohibited for us to put a dime of state money in a toll project and that this year we would have already started a \$2.9 billion project.

Outsourcing: I think we all realize there is a need for outsourcing some of our engineering work. But I will also say that it is imperative that we maintain and improve the skills, as well as experience, in all of our core function areas. We need to continue to work to get our pay scales more competitive.

Congestion: A few weeks ago I was talking to a transportation expert about traffic congestion and he said he thought it was a hopeless problem, that in effect we have been put in

charge of managing a deteriorating system. I disagree. I strongly disagree. There is not a problem in this state that can't be solved.

TxDOT people: Over the past few years, as I have gotten to know you better, there are two things that have impressed me the most. The first is the quality of dedicated men and women working for the department. The second is your determination to get the job done regardless of the obstacles put in your way. ☆

Purpose: In public service - whether you're an employee, or elected or appointed, or whatever - it's wise to remember why you do what you do. ... I want to make a difference because I have children and I will — someday, God willing — have grandchildren.

Texas: And there are other generations of Texans to follow us who will experience this unique thing called Texas. ... And I wish to make a difference because I want the Texas experience to survive. I want it to continue forever

because I think it's unique in the world of civilized man and woman.

The future: I honestly believe that every year we gather and meet here, and every year you continue to gather and meet after my service on the commission is gone - absent doing something different - the speakers at this podium will talk about the increasing amount of cash flow that has to be invested in preservation, and the decreasing amount of cash flow available for new construction. Yet, a new

generation of legislative leaders brings to the table three primary concerns: new construction, a new focus on safety, and alternative methods of transportation through public transportation. There will be an increasing interest in trains - trains within your urban cities, trains between the urban cities of the state, and trains across the state. ... We just have to remember that every additional dollar cut out of the same defined pie ... is a dollar taken away from something else, most likely new construction. ☆

They're called the Big Five, the most prestigious transportation-related awards in Texas. They honor five big names — Greer, Gilchrist, DeBerry, Perry and Stotzer.

The Big Five

This year's awards — presented October 22 at the 76th annual Transportation Short Course on the campus of Texas A&M University — went to four TxDOT employees and one Texan who is an important friend of the department and transportation in general.

The department's prestigious Extra Mile Award went to 10 employees from the Abilene, Atlanta, Childress and Wichita Falls districts and from the Bridge Division. Each winner went the extra mile, demonstrating heroism in dangerous situations.

Executive Director Mike Behrens spoke on the continuing challenges facing the department. Each member of

the Texas Transportation Commission also offered remarks.

The theme for this year's gathering was "Creating Tomorrow's Transportation System."

More than 110 sessions covered administration and management, construction, materials, planning, project development, right of way, bridges, traffic operations, design, pavement management, maintenance, information systems, environmental issues, and multimodalism.

As it has for more than three-quarters of a century, the Texas Department of Transportation joined the Texas Transportation Institute to co-sponsor the event.

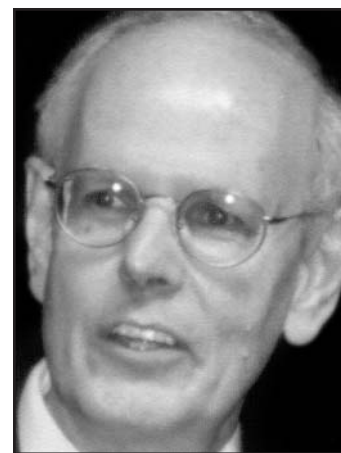
The Dewitt C. Greer Award

is named after one of the legends of the department whose career spanned nearly 54 years — from 1927 to 1981.

Greer was appointed State Highway Engineer in 1940 when he was only 37 years old. He held that position for almost 28 years. He later served the state for 12 years as a member of the Transportation Commission, presiding as chairman for more than three years.

The Greer Award recognizes and encourages the skill, dedication, civic-mindedness, innovation, and performance excellence of TxDOT engineers.

Charles R. Tucker was inspired at an early age to pursue engineering. He grew up in Oklahoma, where his father worked for the highway department for more than four decades. Tucker came to the department as an engineering assistant right after graduation from college. He had earned his bachelor of science degree in civil engineering — from the University of Arkansas.



CHARLES R. TUCKER
Director of Transportation
Planning and Development
Dallas District

■ See GREER, Page 16

Gibb Gilchrist served two terms as State Highway Engineer — in 1924 and 1925 — and from 1928 to 1937. Much of the outstanding reputation the department has enjoyed through the years is a direct result of the high standards he established for the agency in those early days.

He left the department to become dean of engineering at Texas A&M, and later served as president of the university. In 1944, he became the first chancellor of the Texas A&M System.

The Gibb Gilchrist Award honors the performance of an outstanding TxDOT engineer.

Randy Cox has contributed to the development of a safe and reliable transportation system in Texas by focusing on one element of the system — bridges. As a result, he is considered a state and national leader in this particular field.



WILLIAM R. (RANDY) COX
Director of the Field
Operations Section
Bridge Division

■ See GILCHRIST, Page 16

The Luther DeBerry Award is named for the man who served as the department's State Highway Engineer from 1973 to 1980.

The award is presented for "outstanding contribution to the state of Texas in the field of transportation."

Bernie Dodd has been with the department more than three decades and a member of the TxDOT Family a lot longer. Some might say he was "born" into the department as his father had a long career with TxDOT.

Dodd has established his own legacy in his part of the state with the numerous transportation improvements he has overseen.



BERNIE K. DODD
Athens Area Engineer
Tyler District

TxDOT puts a huge emphasis on mentoring young employees and Dodd has been one of the best. Other engineers regularly seek out Dodd for his guidance and advice about maintenance and about construction materials and procedures.

■ See DeBERRY, Page 21

The Russell H. Perry Award, first awarded in 1989, is named for the Dallas attorney, businessman and philanthropist. The award recognizes citizens for leadership in creating public awareness of the need for adequate transportation facilities in the state.

Charles R. Perry, who has strong ties to Midland-Odessa, considers himself a friend of the award's namesake but is no relation to him. He is distinguished in every aspect of a varied professional life that has included leadership roles in business and government, and in organizations promoting civic and professional growth.

Perry has served in the role of president on several occasions — of companies, of a community United Way, of a college board of regents, and of a petroleum association.

A 1998 winner of the TxDOT Road Hand Award,



CHARLES R. PERRY
Chairman of the Board
Perry Management Inc.

■ See PERRY, Page 17

The Raymond E. Stotzer Jr. Award is named for the man who served as engineer-director of the department from 1986-1989.

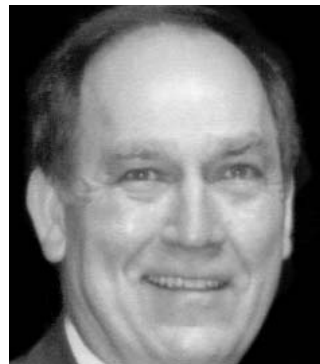
It is presented to a non-engineer who displays outstanding leadership, dedication, and service to the department.

Those who best know **Jim Daily** offer this profile:

"one cool customer" who has a reputation for keeping calm, for focusing on what needs doing, and for getting things done.

While not a Texas native, Daily got here as fast as possible. Born in Louisiana, he earned a bachelor of arts degree in general studies from Louisiana Tech University.

Before coming to TxDOT, he had served as an officer in the U.S. Air Force. As a military veteran who



JAMES W. (JIM) DAILY
Maintenance Support Branch
Maintenance Division

■ See STOTZER, Page 17

Greer award winner helping Dallas District for 38 years

Continued from Page 14

Over the years, Tucker — who started out with a slide rule, a trigonometry book, and a drafting table back in the 1960s — has seen many changes in the way plans are developed. Now an expert in computer-aided design systems and programs, Tucker has designed, supervised and reviewed plans on many transportation projects, including everything from basic two-lane rural roads to major freeways.

He has served as a department design instructor, helping train the next generation of TxDOT engineers in the finer points of assembling a good set of plans. In recent years, he has also been heavily involved in transportation planning and development.

Under Tucker's leadership, the Dallas District completed its first major-investment study. That study

[Tucker] started out with a slide rule, a trigonometry book, and a drafting table back in the 1960s

recommended construction of a new parkway as a way to reduce traffic congestion through a city's central business area.

It's a big project — estimated at \$307 million. Combined with proposed improvements on nearby interstate routes, the total corridor cost is more than \$1 billion.

The process he and his staff established for the first major-investment study has been used with success on studies of four other major freeways in the district.

Aesthetics is an important part of the design of many projects. Tucker has worked with local cities and citizens groups to ensure that pleasing

patterns, color schemes, and other amenities are part of the final product.

He has worked in the same district throughout his 38-year TxDOT career and has helped handle a dramatically increasing workload. Back in 1997, construction lettings in the district totaled \$197 million. This year the lettings are expected to top \$370 million — an increase in five years of more than 85 percent.

Major design accomplishments include Interstate 635 in Mesquite and Irving, I-20 in Dallas and Kaufman counties, US 75 in Plano and State Highway 161 in Irving.

He works in cooperative meetings with local governments and planning organizations to solve transportation problems. He served on the Surface Transportation Technical Committee for the North Central Texas Council of Governments for nearly five years. ☼

Gilchrist winner nationally recognized as bridge authority

Continued from Page 15

Cox serves on several TxDOT and Federal Highway Administration work groups and research committees to help further the knowledge in this field. This research has even taken him overseas to study European bridges.

Cox has come a long way since his first department job as an engineering assistant where he performed routine detailed calculations and assisted in the design of simple structures. His career has spanned many years and many miles. Over the years he has designed various bridges across the state, including preliminary designs for a portion of the San Antonio "Y" segmental concrete superstructure.

Back in the mid-1980s, Cox began serving on the old Area 2 and Area 4 research committees looking at construction, materials, and structures. He continues to serve today as a member of the Research Management Committee on structures.

Certified as a professional engineer, he pioneers the use of state-of-the-art bridge technology. His team recently coordinated deployment of an acoustic monitoring system for stay cables on the Fred Hartman Bridge near Baytown. This system provides information on the condition of the cables, logging their performance in various weather conditions to evaluate their structural integrity. The result is reliable data about the performance of the cables, allowing the district to better plan and budget work on the bridge.

To help the public, and particularly the trucking industry, Cox directed the development of a software application allowing truckers and their companies to use the Internet to easily locate publicly owned bridges that are weight-restricted or closed.

This interactive map allows truckers and others to plan their routes and avoid exceeding the maximum safe weight limits for bridges.

To support district operations, Cox oversees the federally mandated bridge safety-inspection program. This provides a routine and uniform system for bridge inspections statewide.

In addition to being in charge of TxDOT's underwater and fracture-critical bridge inspections, Cox also headed up completion of the new Bridge Inspection Manual, now on the Internet.

A native of San Antonio with a civil engineering degree from the University of Texas at Austin, Cox performed a key leadership role in September 2001 after the collapse of the Queen Isabella Causeway in the Pharr District.

He assembled the team of divers and bridge inspectors and all were on site within eight hours of the collapse. They were there to assess the stability of the bridge and aid in recovery efforts. ☼

Perry winner known for improving life in Texas

Continued from Page 15

... a most distinguished friend of transportation, a man who repeatedly has propelled efforts creating public awareness of the need for adequate transportation facilities in the state.

Perry understands the power of transportation to build prosperity and to advance economic growth.

Highly regarded in his home community, Perry has organized, founded, and coordinated a variety of organizations that have improved the lives of people throughout Texas.

Here's a quick profile: worked in business management and development, in energy exploration, in bank-

ing, and in motor freight ... the former commissioner and chair of the Texas National Research Laboratory Commission, also known as the Texas Agency for the Superconducting Super Collider ... very active in community life with a long list of civic and professional involvements ... has headed up the Midland-Odessa Transportation Alliance (also known as MOTRAN). Today the alliance is widely recognized as the transportation voice of the region — with representatives from the two cities, two counties, and both chambers of commerce working together.

Perry holds distinguished business titles with three enterprises: chairman of the board and chief executive officer of Perry Management Inc., chairman

of the board and chief executive officer of Avion Flight Center, and chairman of the board and president of Perry Gas Processor Inc.

Over a long life, he has received many accolades. Having been named Outstanding Citizen of Odessa, he also was cited as a distinguished graduate of the University of Oklahoma's College of Engineering. Nearly 35 years ago he was named Engineer of the Year by the Permian Basin Chapter of the Texas Society of Professional Engineers.

This award honors a most distinguished friend of transportation, a man who repeatedly has propelled efforts creating public awareness of the need for adequate transportation facilities in the state. ★

Stotzer winner keeps his cool during emergencies

Continued from Page 15

served in Vietnam, he knows how to deal with emergencies. That's good — because it is his duty to coordinate TxDOT emergency efforts when disasters happen.

He has guided the department's efforts in many emergencies. These included the Jarrell Tornado in 1997, the 45,000-acre Fort Stockton wildfire in May 2000, and the severe ice storms in December 2000 and January 2001.

Daily also played an important role in helping the state's emergency response to the October 1994 Houston flood and in the Houston flood from Tropical Storm Allison in June 2001.

After the Del Rio flood in August 1998, the governor's office tasked TxDOT with the lead in developing contracts for cleanup in the aftermath of the disaster. Daily directed development of the contracts. These contracts called for removal of the debris, for a landfill to receive the debris, for proper

He has guided the department's efforts in many emergencies. These included the Jarrell Tornado in 1997, the 45,000-acre Fort Stockton wildfire in May 2000, and the severe ice storms in December 2000 and January 2001.

disposal of all hazardous materials associated with the cleanup, and for the sensitive handling of the remains of victims found in the debris.

Daily was the first person notified by the Pharr District following the collapse of the Queen Isabella Causeway. He set into motion the notification of the executive director and the mobilization of the support operations from Austin.

Further, Daily has been instrumental in getting millions of dollars for the department in reimbursement from the Federal Highway Administration.

He first came to work for TxDOT

in February 1985 in the Safety and Maintenance Operations Division. He has held a variety of responsibilities, all of them with the words "administrator," "director" or "manager" in the job titles. He was instrumental in the development of the first Maintenance Management Training School.

He negotiated a memorandum of understanding with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department concerning the maintenance of park roads and boat ramps. He also developed agreements with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice to expand the use of inmate labor to clean up and beautify highway right of way.

Over these past 17 years with TxDOT, Daily has shown outstanding leadership, dedication and service. One area in which Daily combines these traits is in planning the department's annual Maintenance Conference. With 800 people attending, the event is second in size only to the Short Course. ★

Only a few go



Executive Director Mike Behrens applauds this year's Extra Mile Award honorees.

The Extra Mile Award

program began in 1983.

Since then, more than 120

TxDOT people have

received the award.

ABILENE DISTRICT

- ★ Ronnie Balliew
- ★ Gary Teichelman

The man — stranded in the middle of the road screaming about his predicament — could not swim.

Nine inches of rain fell in a few hours on Albany, northeast of Abilene, on April 25, 2002. Rising flood waters ravaged roadways and neighborhoods. The flood claimed at least one life. These men earned their Extra Mile Award for their actions that day to save many from the torrent.

Ronnie Balliew is a sign technician with the Shackelford

■ See ABILENE, Page 20

ATLANTA DISTRICT

- ★ Tim Guyer

Guyer crawled through the broken windshield and found the injured man hanging upside down by his seatbelt.

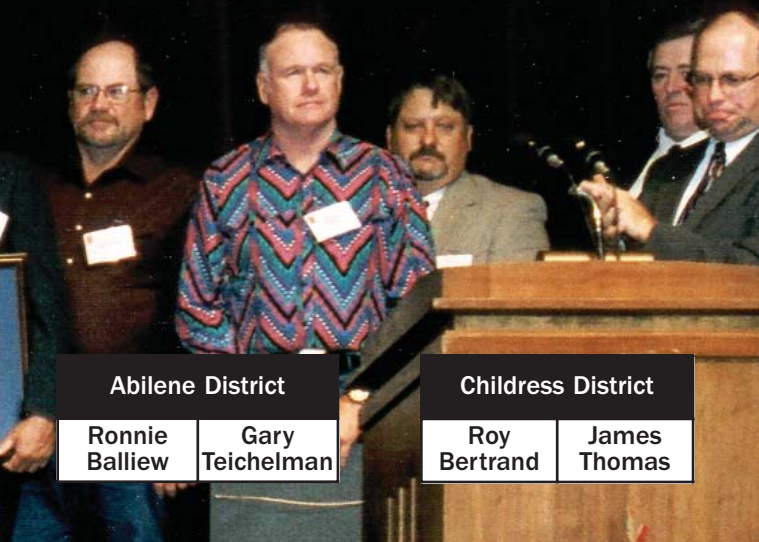
Witnessing a dramatic collision on Interstate 20, this TxDOT engineering technician made a dramatic rescue, earning himself the Extra Mile Award for his efforts.

On July 25, 2002, Tim Guyer and a co-worker witnessed the accident on Interstate 20.

A car traveling at a high rate of speed went off the pavement, over-corrected, lost control, and

■ See ATLANTA, Page 20

the *Extra Mile*



TxDOT photo / Geoff Appold

The TxDOT Extra Mile Award recognizes individual employees who have put their own lives in danger acting to save the life of another, to prevent injury, or to diminish a potentially life-threatening situation.

BRIDGE DIVISION

- ★ Mickey Estlack
- ★ Joe Owen
- ★ Bruce Sims
- ★ Kent Steger

They were there for 14 hours a day for nearly a week, returning only for a short visit home before resuming assistance in the recovery work for another week.

Each of these divers faced hazards above and below the murky waters of Laguna Madre below the collapsed Queen Isabella Causeway. A U.S. Navy diver at the scene in September 2001 described it as “looking like a war zone.”

■ See **BRIDGE**, Page 21

CHILDRESS DISTRICT

- ★ Roy Bertrand
- ★ James Thomas

“They got on their hands and knees and dug him out from under the coal car.”

It was May 28, 2002. Two trains traveling on the same track near Clarendon, Texas, collided head on. These men earned their Extra Mile Award that day for saving one man from being crushed by one of the trains.

Roy Bertrand is an engineering technician. He has been with TxDOT for nearly five years. James Thomas is a maintenance

■ See **CHILDRESS**, Page 21

WICHITA FALLS DISTRICT

- ★ Kade Kimbrow

The fire department credited his professionalism, composure under stress, and first-aid skills for saving the life of the seriously injured child.

A father and his two children were trapped in a mangled car. All were hurt and smoke was beginning to fill the vehicle. Kade Kimbrow earned his Extra Mile Award that day — Sept. 21, 2001 — for coming to their aid.

While inspecting traffic control signs, Kimbrow saw the car slam into a pickup. In fact, the

■ See **WICHITA**, Page 20

ABILENE DISTRICT

Continued from Page 18

County Maintenance Section in the Abilene District. He has been with TxDOT more than nine years. Gary Teichelman is the Shackelford County Maintenance Section assistant and has been with TxDOT 20 years.

At one point, rain was falling so hard that Teichelman could not see the hood of his vehicle. Up to eight inches of hail covered one road. Balliew reported water on Farm to Market Road 1084 running up to five-foot deep. The swift waters prevented city and county emergency vehicles from rescue attempts. Then TxDOT forces went into action.

It was Balliew's job to divert motorists from the rising water. Not everyone listened. As a result, Balliew had to drive his sign truck into the

water and help a motorist into the back of the sign truck — as the water by then was pouring into the man's truck. The man — stranded in the middle of the road screaming about his predicament — could not swim.

A bit later, with flood waters all around and getting deeper, Teichelman was driving a TxDOT front-end loader. He was joined by Balliew who rode out in front in the loader's bucket as they went to rescue an elderly couple (and their dog) from a mobile home endangered by a nearby raging creek.

Teichelman's expert handling of the loader over dangerous ground helped save the day. He had to move logs out of the way with the bucket — with Balliew in it — and threaded the loader down a narrow path between

houses, gas meters, and power lines.

Meanwhile, Balliew jumped from the front-end loader into the waist-deep, running water so he could reach the couple who had meant to "sit it out." Balliew convinced them to come with him to safety. He even made a trip back into the moving water to retrieve an oxygen tank needed by one of the flood victims.

To get to safe ground, Teichelman had to back his way out through the dangerous water.

As they passed another house — and hearing cries for help — they rescued four women and a three-month-old baby.

Teichelman and Balliew's courageous actions that day helped save at least eight people, including an infant. ★

ATLANTA DISTRICT

Continued from Page 18

began flipping.

The car then hit a semi-truck and was dragged down the road before the two vehicles separated. After hitting a guardrail extruder terminal, the car finally came to rest upside down — with a ruptured and leaking fuel tank.

Without regard for his personal safety, Guyer ran to the overturned

car. Sustaining several cuts and scrapes from the broken glass, Guyer crawled through the broken windshield and found the injured man hanging upside down by his seatbelt.

Guyer carefully unbuckled the seatbelt and gently laid the man down inside the car, helping to keep him as calm and comfortable as possible until EMS arrived.

By this time, a crowd of onlookers had gathered. But no one had thought to stop the flow of gasoline from the fuel tank. It was Guyer who stuffed a rag in the opening, effectively reducing the threat of fire.

Guyer is with the Marshall Area Office in the Atlanta District. He has worked for the department for three years. ★

WICHITA FALLS DISTRICT

Continued from Page 19

two sliding vehicles barely missed his state truck.

Seeing that the driver of the pickup was unhurt, Kimbrew called for emergency assistance and then went to aid those most seriously injured — a father, his five-year old son and two-year-old daughter. All three were still in the car.

The boy, in the front seat with his seatbelt on, had hit his head on the dashboard. He was severely cut across his forehead. Blood covered his face. Kimbrew pulled the boy from the car first, placing him on the back slope of the ditch.

Returning to the car, Kimbrew next

pulled the little girl to safety. He unbuckled the girl from her carseat as smoke began to fill the inside of the car. She was scratched but had no serious injuries.

He then returned to remove the children's father. Described as a large man, his knees were crushed in the collision. Kimbrew somehow managed to pull him from the car.

Kimbrew then administered first aid to the boy, who had two large cuts to the forehead. The local fire chief credited Kimbrew's first-aid skills and noted that "even the emergency room physician was impressed with Kade's bandaging technique."

When emergency-response crews

arrived to care for the injured, Kimbrew continued to help and protect others by securing the area and directing traffic.

The Electra Volunteer Fire Department credited his professionalism, composure under stress, and first-aid skills for saving the life of the seriously injured child. The crash had seriously damaged the boy's left eye, for a time leaving that eye blind. Recent reports say that vision is now returning.

Kimbrew is a maintenance technician with the Electra Maintenance Office in the Wichita Falls District. He has been with TxDOT for six years. ★

DeBerry winner known for honest, direct demeanor

Continued from Page 15

Some who have benefited from Dodd's influence and experience have risen through the ranks at TxDOT. These include Zane Webb, director of the Maintenance Division; Richard Skopik, Waco District engineer; and Dennis Cooley, Lufkin District engineer.

Here's how his friends describe Dodd: "possesses an honest, yet direct demeanor, always conducting business in a straight-to-the-point manner, which allows (him) to better relate to the residents and leaders of the community."

He recently served on a statewide task force to make recommendations

... "possesses an honest, yet direct demeanor, always conducting business in a straight-to-the-point manner, which allows (him) to better relate to the residents and leaders of the community."

for the Routine Maintenance Budget.

The 34-year veteran of the department has worked in the same district over the years, but has held a variety of jobs during that time.

An area engineer these past 18 years, Dodd oversees two counties with 52 employees, 664 centerline

miles and 1,515 lane miles, and a stretch of interstate highway.

To reduce congestion, he helped install the first rural intelligent transportation system in a city of 3,000 which swells to 100,000 every month during one of the nation's largest flea markets.

Facing some of the poorest soil conditions in East Texas, Dodd initiated ideas to rehabilitate miles of deteriorating pavement.

He attained his license as a professional engineer in 1970. He is a graduate of the University of Texas at Arlington with a bachelor of science degree in civil engineering. ★

BRIDGE DIVISION

Continued from Page 19

Even so, these four divers repeatedly put their own lives in danger to gather critical information for distraught relatives and emergency workers. They identified submerged vehicles. They assessed the stability of the bridge and the effects of currents and debris on emergency recovery efforts.

They earned the Extra Mile Award for exhibiting courage, professional skill, and compassion.

The divers repeatedly entered the

debris-filled, fast-moving water. They understood that further collapse was a possibility. Other hazards included poor visibility, jagged reinforcing steel and cables, broken glass from submerged automobiles, and shifting pieces of broken concrete. All of this faced them in the strong currents that quickly tired the divers working in the unsettled water.

The team remained at the site until its work was done. They were there for 14 hours a day for nearly a week,

returning only for a short visit home before resuming assistance in the recovery work for another week.

Mickey Estlack has been with TxDOT for more than 15 years. Joe Owen has been a TxDOT employee for more than 12 years. Bruce Sims has been with the department for 22 years. Kent Steger has been with TxDOT for more than eight years. The four bridge engineering specialists are members of the Bridge Division's underwater inspection team. ★

CHILDRESS DISTRICT

Continued from Page 19

and engineering technician. He has been with TxDOT nearly 23 years.

Both men work with the Donley County Maintenance Section in the Childress District.

In a normal response to an area emergency, TxDOT was called to assist with traffic control. Bertrand and Thomas rushed to the scene to do their job.

When they arrived, Bertrand and Thomas learned that one of the rail-

road workers was trapped under the coal car. This was near the train's engine, which was on fire. Rescuers were concerned the burning train might fall on the victim.

The two men from TxDOT grabbed shovels from their truck and began digging to help other rescuers save the railroad worker.

As the fire department sprayed foam on the fire to keep it away from the rescuers and victim, and as wreckers applied cables to the train's engine to keep it from moving, even

as the coal continued to shift, Bertrand and Thomas kept digging.

The railroad worker was finally freed from the coal. His injuries turned out to be minor compared to what they could have been if it had not been for the courage and determination of these two men.

A state trooper at the scene credited Bertrand and Thomas with saving the man's life: "They got on their hands and knees and dug him out from under the coal car." ★

2002 Texas Quality Initiative awards



Six projects involving TxDOT people have received 2002 Texas Quality Initiative (TQI) Making a Difference awards.

PARTNERING

GOLD

I-30 Lancaster Avenue Celebration TxDOT Fort Worth District

Population growth outpaced Fort Worth's I-30/I-35W Mixmaster Interchange design as early as 1973, when city and state planning meetings began to take place. The proposed project plan included widening the I-30 overhead through downtown with Lancaster Avenue serving as a frontage road below.

Citizen groups opposed this design and sued. Alternatives were planned. After 30 years of struggle, the freeway finally opened as a newly realigned I-30, located behind the city's historic buildings.

The old I-30 overhead, seen as a physical and psychological barrier to the revitalization of downtown, was then demolished.

The Fort Worth District went out of its way to turn years of past negative relationships centered on this project into positive results.

District workers joined with the entire community to plan a celebration to signal the removal of the overhead. This event also recognized the beginning of several hundred million dollars in public works projects along the corridor. It was in the planning of the event and working as a partner with the community that lasting long-term relationships were forged.

These relationships are resulting in successful partnerships on several other city projects. Downtown Fort Worth is being revitalized and new growth is taking place in various urban areas.

BREAKING THE MOLD

GOLD

Plans Online Project TxDOT General Services Division

This team award identifies those champions of new ideas whose innovative departure from current practice produces major results. One such idea is the TxDOT Plans Online system. The General Services Division, with representation from other divisions, developed the system.

Engineering plans and proposals for TxDOT projects are published electronically on the Internet for public access, and on the TxDOT intranet for access by TxDOT offices across the state. Plans Online provides electronic distribution of project plan information to TxDOT partners for construction and maintenance projects. It has revolutionized the way TxDOT does business in regard to its construction and maintenance projects.

This effort saves the department more than \$1.5 million each year in distribution costs and speeds information to the public.

Offering extensive project documentation at a single location on the Internet has opened the door for greater participation by the business community. TxDOT expects the system to grow well into the future, benefiting the department and its customers.

This project was one of the two TQI recipients at the National Partnership for Highway Quality awards ceremony in November. Plans Online received the Breaking the Mold (Bronze Award) there.

The TQI Making a Difference awards, presented on even-numbered years, include four categories: Partnering, Breaking the Mold, Risk Taking, and State Quality Initiative.

Mike Behrens, TxDOT executive director, presented the awards Sept. 5 in Austin during the annual luncheon hosted by Associated General Contractors of Texas.

TQI promotes and develops continuous quality improvement in the planning, design, construction, and maintenance of Texas highways. TQI also promotes partnerships to improve highway quality.

The initiative brings together many partners: TxDOT, the Federal Highway Administration, the Associated General Contractors of Texas, Texas Hot Mix Asphalt Pavement Association, Texas Aggregates and Concrete Association, Texas Chapter-American Concrete Pavement Association, Texas Public Works Association, Texas Transportation Institute, Center for Transportation Research, and Consulting Engineers Council of Texas.

Two of the TQI Making a Difference award winners have been selected to receive National Partnership for Highway Quality awards (one silver and one bronze). These awards were presented Nov. 14 in Salt Lake City, Utah. Winners are noted below.

BREAKING THE MOLD

SILVER

Antique Chicago Brick Finish Project I-610 West, in Bellaire Houston District

The antique brickwork visible from the frontage roads at Houston's Bellaire and Evergreen streets is turning motorists' heads. Reminding people of the brick in Chicago's Wrigley Field, the retaining walls running alongside the expressway are clever facsimiles — formed concrete, false-finished with paint to look like brick. Houston District and Williams Brothers Construction partnered with Scott Derr Painting of Webster, Texas, to achieve this result.

Derr used innovative concrete coatings on the retaining wall to protect and maintain the wall surface and capture the appearance of antique masonry. Derr also worked with other paint companies to develop a new low-sheen, graffiti-resistant permanent coating for a protective finish that did not compromise the weathered look.

RISK TAKING

GOLD

Queen Isabella Causeway Reconstruction Project TxDOT Pharr District

This award spotlights teams that take intelligent and calculated risks to prove that there are better ways to do things.

Responding to the Queen Isabella Causeway tragedy in the quickest, safest manner possible involved huge risks. One of the reasons this project was so successful was that it built on already developed partnerships. TxDOT, Williams Brothers Construction Co., and the community worked together.

The time constraints, project complexity, number of stakeholders, possible environmental impacts, and the high-profile nature of the project involved great risks never before experienced by the district.

Several individuals led this team to a successful outcome. Reconstruction of the bridge was completed in 56 days — 30 days ahead of schedule. This eased the financial burden of loss of tourism and jobs by an estimated \$55 million.

The Queen Isabella Causeway project was the other TQI National Partnership for Highway Quality Awards winner. The Causeway project received the Risk Taking Silver Award.

STATE QUALITY INITIATIVE

GOLD

Implementation and Modifications of the Centralized Advertising Program for Highway Construction and Maintenance Projects TxDOT Design Division

This award recognizes a premier state quality initiative such as the centralized advertising system that was developed by a cross-functional group of employees from several districts, divisions and offices and implemented by Design Division.

Consolidated advertising of construction and maintenance projects has saved TxDOT \$3.7 million since March 2000 while redirecting 4,680 work-hours per year to other duties.

Advertisements once were created separately and placed by the Design Division, Maintenance Division and by each of TxDOT's district offices. Maintenance and the 25 districts received invoices, prepared vouchers, and forwarded the payment information to the Finance Division for pro-

cessing. The old system allowed potential overlaps and delayed payments.

Centralization required a great deal of coordination, cooperation and attention to detail. The team worked with more than 200 newspapers, 25 district offices, several division offices, and the Federal Highway Administration. From March 2000 through December 2001, the system created 5,580 advertisements for 4,018 construction and maintenance projects.

No projects were lost from a letting due to lack of legally required advertising. The ads themselves are more informative, easier to find, and of greater benefit to contractors and the public. Cost savings from September 2001 through August 2002 were \$1.7 million.

SILVER

Compost Program TxDOT Design Division

The composting program is a partnership between state and federal agencies, district and division employees, private construction, and composting companies. TxDOT uses several techniques to control erosion on highway maintenance and construction projects. The use of compost is one of these erosion-control practices.

Although compost cost is only slightly cheaper, cost savings can be measured in avoided costs. Avoided costs include less vegetative watering, less reseeding, and quicker removal of barricades to enable moving into the next phase of construction.

TxDOT is partnering with the dairy industry to use dairy manure as compost, keeping it out of the water supply. TxDOT continues to look for new ways to use compost effectively while providing an environmental benefit and saving on associated costs. ★



AASHTO President's Awards laud efforts in Texas

Texas is only state to win in more than one category

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) has announced winners of the group's 2002 President's Awards.

Four of the awards recognized efforts in Texas. Since the AASHTO awards were first presented in 1998, no state other than Texas has won in more than one category in the same year.

Awards were presented Oct. 15 at the association's conference in Anchorage, Alaska.

Following are summaries of the citations recognizing those efforts meriting recognition by the association.

ENVIRONMENTAL: TxDOT COMPOST PROGRAM

The composting program is a partnership between state and federal agencies, district and division employees, private construction, and composting companies. TxDOT uses several erosion-control techniques on highway maintenance and construction projects. The use of compost is one of these techniques. By adding organic matter in the form of compost, poor soils are improved, revegetation occurs more quickly with less erosion, and TxDOT saves time and money.

This program has been demonstrated in workshops around the state. In September 2001, an additional compost specification was approved. Although compost cost is only slightly cheaper, cost savings can be measured in avoided costs. Avoided costs include less vegetative watering, less reseeding, and quicker removal of barricades to enable moving into the next phase of construction.

Recently receiving a \$1.2 million grant (the largest ever to be received under the Clean Water Act) from the Environmental Protection Agency, TxDOT is partnering with the dairy

industry to use dairy manure as compost, keeping it out of the water supply.

TxDOT team members involved in this effort include **Barrie Cogburn**, **Rebecca Davio** and **Ray Hodson**.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION: QUEEN ISABELLA CAUSEWAY

The Public Transportation team established and maintained public transportation over land and water between South Padre Island and the mainland (Port Isabel) in the face of the collapse of the Queen Isabella Causeway on Sept. 15, 2001. When the causeway collapsed, the island counted 15,000 visitors and 2,000 vehicles, in addition to the town's 2,500 residents and their vehicles.

Within minutes of the accident, TxDOT began responding to the emergency. After initial assessment, one of the first concerns was how to get people off the island. TxDOT soon had two 15-vehicle ferries on the way to the island from the Corpus Christi District to provide vehicle transport. By 7 a.m. the first day of the collapse, local fishing boats began shuttling people until other passenger boats arrived. The entire community came together to address public transportation needs and to establish an effective shuttle system over water and ground until the causeway could be rebuilt. This system was vital to keeping the island's economy functioning.

Members of the TxDOT core team included **Amadeo Saenz Jr.**, **Jose Gaytan Jr.**, **Mario Jorge**, **Behrooz Badiozzamani**, **Toribio Garza Jr.**, **Cresenciano Falcon**, **Danny Espinoza**, **John Blackwell**, **Garciela Cantu**, **David Casteel**, **Arnold Cortez**, **Jim Daily**, **Joe Graff**, **Zane Webb**, **Robin Longwell**, **Margot Massey**, **Vickie McHorse** and **Debbie Parr**.

TRANSPORTATION RAIL: SOUTH ORIENT RAIL LINE

Employees in the Multi-modal Section of TxDOT's Transportation Planning and Programming Division received the team award for their oversight of the South Orient rail line and their efforts to promote its rehabilitation and usage for economic development and freight transportation.

TxDOT has worked to preserve a vital rail corridor from the Texas-Mexico border at Presidio, through West Texas, and into Coleman County. This rail line interchanges with Ferromex at the border, and with Union Pacific near Alpine. Other interchanges occur with the Burlington Northern Santa Fe, and Fort Worth and Western Railroads.

Besides serving as a viable NAFTA corridor, this rail line has been a vital part of the economy of this area, serving the agricultural and mining industries of West Texas.

Through filings with the Surface Transportation Board and negotiations with various public and private entities, TxDOT acquired ownership of the infrastructure, equipment and right-of-way for this line in 2001. An international partnership was formed when the lease and operating agreement was reached between Texas Pacifico Transportation Ltd. and TxDOT.

Operations continue over the line. Rehabilitation of the infrastructure, which had deteriorated significantly under prior owner-operators, has begun. The rail staff continues to negotiate a complex public-private partnership between their roles as public servants and contract managers of a private enterprise.

TxDOT team members involved in this effort include **Wayne A. Dennis, P.E.**, **Paul Douglas**, **Wilda Won**, and **Gilbert Wilson**.

■ See AASHTO, Page 25

TxDOT scores AASHTO team awards

Three teams of TxDOT workers received 2002 Team Excellence awards from the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO).

PATHFINDER

The Traffic Website Committee of Houston TranStar was among nine teams in the nation to receive the award at the Pathfinder level for accomplishing their mission "through use of appropriate tools and techniques."

The team's task was to improve the information that the traveling public receives concerning traffic conditions in the Houston metro area.

The expected result was to see an increase in the number of accesses to the Web site and a rise in customer satisfaction. The actual results show a 424 percent increase in the number of accesses to the site from the year 2000 to 2001 and a 63.7 percent increase in the number of users over that same time. Customers found more to view and found it a reliable information source. Hits per user went from 14.2 times per month to 45.5 times per month (from 2000 to 2001). Also, 55.2 percent of users saved time traveling by using the data given to them on this Web site. And 88.2 percent of the users rated the site as very good or excellent. TxDOT, working with the Texas Transportation Institute, spon-

sors the site. It provides information and links related to most modes of transportation, emergency preparedness, and environmental issues.

TRAILBLAZER

At the Trailblazer level, from among 14 in the nation receiving the AASHTO award in this category, teams from the Wichita Falls District and from the department's Design Division gained recognition. This level recognizes teams that "accomplish their missions but (which) may not use appropriate tools and techniques."

The Cross Plains Rural Transportation Council, in the Wichita Falls District, has allowed TxDOT to achieve several outcomes, including an increase of more than 500 percent in participation by the public in the planning process.

TxDOT's Wichita Falls District Office staff initiated a plan in April 2001 creating the council. The 71-member group promotes communication among TxDOT and its rural constituents and provides feedback on financial and planning issues within the state transportation system.

TxDOT's Design Division sponsors the Implementation of and Modifications to Centralized Advertising Program. The team's initial mission was to implement an automated centralized system for creating, placing and paying for legally required newspaper advertisements for

construction and maintenance contracts. The ongoing mission is for constant improvements and additions to the system.

Previously, individual ads were placed in a minimum of three papers for each project. Some ads were created and placed by the Design Division, some by the Maintenance Division, and some by the 25 TxDOT district offices. Those offices received invoicing documents, prepared vouchers, and forwarded payment information to the Finance Division for processing. Centralization shifted these duties to one centralized office.

Centralization combined ads, increased their visibility, reduced the cost of advertising, cut the time spent on advertising duties, and increased efficiency. While less time is spent on advertising duties, newspaper accounts are in better shape, payments are easier to track and copies of ad paperwork is decreased.

As a result, TxDOT and Texas taxpayers realized direct-cost savings of \$3.9 million on newspaper advertising. Further, more than 9,000 staff hours previously spent on advertising duties were available to conduct other TxDOT business. The ads are more informative, easier to find, and are of greater benefit to contractors and the public. ☼

AASHTO President's Awards

Continued from Page 24

RESEARCH CATEGORY: PRECAST BENT CAP SYSTEM

This team has contributed significantly to the use of precast bent caps in bridges in Texas and elsewhere in the nation. Their efforts minimized disruptions to traffic and to the environment. They also increased work-zone safety, and improved bridge designs.

The team promoted use of the research results by initiating the appli-

cation of precast bent caps as an innovative technology to the newly created AASHTO Technology Implementation Group. They also worked with the group to organize meetings to promote the technology.

A brochure and video on prefabricated bridges were produced. With its leadership in the initial research, use, promotion and follow-up research, this team has increased the effectiveness of

bridge building in Texas and nationwide.

Team members are Tracey Friggle, P.E., Dallas District; John P. Vogel, P.E., Houston District; Tom Yarbrough, P.E., Research & Technology Implementation Office; and Bridge Division members Gregg A. Freeby, P.E., David P. Hohmann, P.E., Michael D. Hyzak, P.E., Ronald D. Medlock, P.E., Mary Lou Ralls, P.E., and Lloyd M. Wolf, P.E. ☼

Behrens presents awards recognizing

Executive Director Mike Behrens presented a dozen awards to TxDOT people at the annual luncheon on Sept. 5 hosted by Associated General Contractors of Texas in Austin.

DESIGN AWARDS

ODESSA DISTRICT:

The Odessa District completed a \$2.4 million project to rehabilitate intersections along Loop 250 in Midland Sept. 28, 2001. Reece Albert Inc. was the contractor.

TxDOT's Midland Area Engineer, **Doug Eichorst**, addressed a number of long-range maintenance concerns when he opted for a special concrete design called "white topping." This design used concrete placed in a three-inch thickness over an asphalt base. It will extend the life of the intersection pavement by 10 years, providing better service at less cost.

To speed construction, Eichorst specified use of a fast-curing ("fast-track") concrete design mix that would enable motorists to drive on it within 24-48 hours after it has been poured, rather than the usual four to seven days.

PHARR DISTRICT:

Williams Brothers Construction Corp. began work on a \$5.9 million project for the demolition and reconstruction of 400 feet of the Queen Isabella Causeway on Sept. 26, 2001. The bridge had partly collapsed after having been struck by barges early in the morning of Sept. 15.

Williams Brothers and TxDOT representatives conferred at the site less than five hours after the initial collapse to assess the damage. The accident made headlines around the world, as did the accelerated effort to get the bridge back in service. Work was completed Nov. 21, 2001 — in 56 of the 87 days allotted. Williams

Brothers began work on a very aggressive schedule, with overlapping phases.

Jody Ellington, Pharr District bridge engineer, worked with the TxDOT Bridge Division in all phases of the design effort to expedite and produce the design documents for the emergency contracts.

CONSTRUCTION AWARDS

AMARILLO DISTRICT:

Reconstruction of the interchange at Interstate 40 and I-27 amounted to a complete replacement of both highways in the center of Amarillo. The scope of the project was to add another lane on I-40 in each direction, to build three large bridges on I-40, and to reverse the elevations of both highways.

The contractor was Gilbert Texas Construction. **Sammy J. Harris Jr.**, engineering specialist, was TxDOT's representative on the project. The \$32.8 million project was completed May 15, 2002, and took 633 days — 10 percent less than the 700 days allotted.

A key problem arose when a railroad company did not allow the contractor to place equipment on the railroad property. A revised plan for the steel-beam bridge over the railroad resulted in fewer joints, safer working conditions, and a reduction in the time needed for completing the structure. Everyone involved paid keen attention to safety since a lot of the work was done over live traffic.

DALLAS DISTRICT:

This \$49.3 million project, essentially completed in November, 2001 was to reconstruct nearly eight miles of a freeway from rural four-lane to urban six-lane. The project called for the complete reconstruction of I-45 between Malloy Bridge Road and I-20 in Dallas County.

The contractor was Granite

Construction Co. of Watson, Calif. Representing TxDOT on the project, engineering technician **Mark Jackson** served as chief inspector.

The fact that the project was the first in the state to use a profilometer instead of the standard profilograph to assess the ride quality of the constructed pavement. Further, four value-engineering change proposals were approved, resulting in a savings of more than \$606,000. TxDOT and the contractor shared this.

DALLAS DISTRICT:

This project, which began in January 2000, was for the construction of the State Highway 161 interchange at I-635 in Dallas County. It also included bridges at Los Colinas Boulevard and MacArthur Boulevard. Essentially complete this past July, work progressed at an extraordinary pace — with less than 60 percent of the time charged.

The contractor was J.D. Abrams. The TxDOT representative on the project was engineering specialist **Patrick S. Poston**.

Working together, they developed a revised project sequence of construction to overcome a key problem: a utility delay involving two transportation authorities and two separate contractors working on adjacent projects. To help solve this particular issue, J.D. Abrams began working on the MacArthur Bridge several months before the original anticipated start date.

DALLAS DISTRICT:

J.D. Abrams was the contractor on this \$10.4 million project, for the construction of a roadway interchange at U.S. 75 at Galatyn Crossing in Dallas County. The project was begun in July 1999. The TxDOT project engineer is **Daniel H. Peden**. Limited space was among the problems faced in this project. Most of the work was

highway design, construction

squeezed into the area between main-lanes and frontage roads — about 12.5 meters wide.

Besides many utility conflicts, another challenge was that the interchange construction was taking place over the Dallas Area Rapid Transit light-rail line. The rail line also was under construction. That made coordination and communication among the many parties involved of critical importance.

Representatives of TxDOT and J.D. Abrams reported progress to the city's officials and responded to the city's requests.

LAREDO DISTRICT:

This \$8.2 million project, known as the U.S. 277 Loma Alta Project in Val Verde County, was a long time coming. It was completed last February, after having faced several delays brought on by environmental and archeological issues, and design errors.

Now that it is finished, travelers are applauding TxDOT, the contractor, Allen Keller Co. Inc. and subcontractors, Reece Albert Inc. and Cherokee Bridge and Road. TxDOT's representative was engineer technician **Daniel Cantu**.

The reconstruction required that the road be closed for an eight-mile stretch. Now that the road is complete, the traveling public has a level and smooth 40-foot wide driving surface and a safe scenic highway.

ODESSA DISTRICT:

Completed on time last March, this \$3.9 million roadway reconstruction project in Midland demanded that all involved cooperate and communicate. Everyone did just that, and the project to rebuild Business 158B (Andrews Highway) was completed under budget.

The TxDOT representative on the project was engineering tech **George Garcia**. The roadway ran through a

heavy concentration of businesses. The project also would affect a major hospital.

To minimize complaints, to reduce problems for drivers on the roadway, and to advance the project, those involved began planning early. They invited extensive involvement by the public, and they did most of the construction work at night.

PHARR DISTRICT:

Williams Brothers Construction Corp. began work on a \$5.9 million project for the demolition and reconstruction of 400 feet of the damaged Queen Isabella Causeway Sept. 26, 2001.

To assess the damage, Williams Brothers and TxDOT representatives conferred at the site that morning. Work was completed Nov. 21, 2001 — in 35 percent less time than was allotted.

Williams Brothers began work on a very aggressive schedule, with overlapping phases. **Jose Gaytan Jr.** was the Pharr District construction engineer for TxDOT on this project.

SAN ANTONIO DISTRICT:

The San Antonio District completed a \$16.2 million project to rehabilitate more than seven miles of I-37 in Atascosa County on Feb. 20. Hunter Industries Limited was the contractor. TxDOT representatives on the project were engineering specialist **Hossein Behimehr** and engineering technician **George R. Black**.

Work on the project began in October 1999 and took 410 of the 553 days allotted, reaching completion much faster than expected. From the start, the contractor and TxDOT showed excellent cooperation and communication.

Both saw the need for safety shoulders as a way to reduce accidents that could close the interstate for hours at a time. The cost of adding the shoulders was shared. This brought fewer acci-

dents and minimized disturbances or delays in the construction.

TYLER DISTRICT:

The Tyler District completed a \$7.5 million widening and reconstruction project on Spur 502 in Gregg County on Aug. 24, 2001. Longview Bridge and Road Inc. was the contractor. The TxDOT project manager was engineering technician **Kent M. Clark**.

The project was completed in 233 days — 80 percent of the time budgeted. Field changes and utility conflicts were obstacles. Another problem overcome was raising the elevation of an old roadbed in one area by about six feet while maintaining through-traffic and improving control of erosion.

Among their many actions to keep this project on track, TxDOT and the contractor visited each affected resident and business to explain the construction activities and each phase of construction.

WACO DISTRICT:

The contract for \$4.4 million was for the widening of a rural two-lane section of Farm to Market Road 439 in Bell County to an urban five-lane section. Construction began in March 1999 and was complete on May 2, 2001.

Odell Geer Construction Co. Inc. was the contractor. The TxDOT construction inspector was **Richard L. Hairston**. In handling the project, TxDOT and the contractor showed sensitivity to the local residents. When necessary, they built decorative but functional retaining walls on steep slopes in residential front yards and along commercial frontages next to the right of way. Because the storm-sewer trunk lines would conflict with the roots of several large trees, they designed the trunk lines and the side-walks to meander along the length of the project. This saved trees that otherwise would have been removed. ☼

Award honors environmental stewardship

by **Jim Dobbins**

Environmental Affairs Division

The Tyler District and its Athens Loop Mitigation Project have been honored with the 2002 Environmental Achievement Award.

Presentation of the annual award by the TxDOT Environmental Affairs Division came during an Oct. 21 meeting of TxDOT executives in College Station the day before the start of the annual Transportation Short Course.

The award recognizes the best examples of projects and processes that fulfill transportation objectives while protecting and enhancing the natural and human environment.

"The people at the districts showed personal interest in the projects submitted," said Craig Dunning, a project manager in the division's Project Management Section, who reviewed the nominees. "The extra effort enhanced the overall quality of each project. I was impressed with the initiative that was demonstrated on each of the nominated projects."

■ Winner: Tyler District

When wetlands were affected by the construction of the Athens Loop, the staff of the Tyler District went beyond what was required for mitigation. Partnering with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the district helped create a wetland education center.

To replicate the wetlands affected by the Athens Loop, reproductions were created behind the breeding ponds at the fisheries center. The site has proved to be a magnet for wildlife. A trail through the wetlands provides access for observation and education.

The district's efforts show the positive effects of partnering with other agencies. They also show how mitigation can be maximized for community benefit.

■ Runner-up: San Antonio District

When a major transportation pro-

ject was determined to have a significant effect on an economically disadvantaged area of San Antonio, the San Antonio District staff showed that public involvement efforts really are the key to project success.

The Kelly Parkway Corridor Study Alternatives Analysis was conducted to evaluate design options for a new multi-lane road in southwest San Antonio. A major part of the analysis was a program to encourage public involvement.

The study area presented a number of challenges. The neighborhoods studied are 91 percent Hispanic, with many residents speaking only Spanish. To reach this community, all printed materials and the project website were in Spanish and English, illustrations were used extensively, and translations were provided at all formal and informal meetings.

Opportunities for public comment occurred through meetings, open houses, forums and workshops. Comments were sought by canvassing door to door, the use of telephone and e-mail, and a public involvement office was established near the study area to aid communication.

The effort shows the value of building public support for transportation projects.

■ Honorable Mention: Amarillo District

When safety improvements to an exit ramp on I-40 threatened trees planted 10 years earlier, district construction staff teamed with the Amarillo Parks and Recreation Department and Keep Amarillo Beautiful to move most of the trees.

About a decade ago, TxDOT planted trees along the right of way of I-40 in Amarillo. When an exit ramp was moved for safety purposes, these trees were threatened. Instead of cutting down the trees to make room for the new ramp, Amarillo Area Office construction staff devised a plan to save them.

Amarillo Parks and Recreation Department and Keep Amarillo Beautiful were contacted and arrangements made to donate the threatened trees to the city. The best time to move the trees was worked out, and the majority of the trees then were moved to Amarillo's John Stiff Park.

■ Honorable Mention: Fort Worth District

When the historic Belknap Street Viaduct in Fort Worth was replaced because of deficiencies, local historic preservationists were upset. Fort Worth District staff met with this group to explain how safety, costs, and engineering concerns can make rehabilitating some bridges unfeasible.

District staff and historic preservationists agreed that the city's historic bridges merited documentation. The TxDOT Environmental Affairs Division and the Travel Division worked together to develop a videotape documentary.

The video has been sent to libraries, historical societies, government agencies and officials. It also has aired more than 60 times on community cable television.

■ Honorable Mention: Paris District

Highway beautification efforts begun in the mid-1960s along I-30 in the Paris District received a cost-effective push from the staff of the Sulphur Springs Area Office.

Shortly after I-30 in Franklin County was completed in the 1960s, maintenance staff began planting trees in areas of the right of way where safety was not a concern. In the mid-1990s, this program was revived and expanded. Each year about 15,000 drought-resistant pine seedlings and 800 hardwood seedlings are planted. As the trees develop, they are trimmed and thinned as needed. The trees enhance the appeal of the area and provide habitat for wildlife. ★

Project-development awards recognize Pharr, Abilene districts

The TxDOT Bridge Division presented its bridge project-development awards Oct. 21 at Texas A&M University. The awards single out TxDOT districts achieving the highest efficiency in bringing Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program projects to letting. The awards also recognize reductions in the overall percentage of structurally deficient and functionally obsolete bridges.

Winning districts for 2002 are Abilene (on-system rural district), Brownwood (off-system rural

district), Tyler (on-system urban district), Waco (off-system urban district), San Antonio (on-system metropolitan district), and Fort Worth (off-system metropolitan district).

The division also presented its awards for bridge safety inspections. The award recognizes districts that maintain the highest percentage of compliant bridges.

Winning districts are Pharr (less than 1,500 bridges), Abilene (more than 1,500 bridges). ★

Bridge restoration merits federal award

At the annual meeting in October of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, the Federal Highway Administration recognized TxDOT's restoration of the historic Regency Suspension Bridge with the 2002 Excellence in Highway Design Award. The rehabilitation design won a merit award in the category for historic preservation.

The one-lane, 343-foot-long Regency suspension bridge, which spans the Colorado River at the Mills and San Saba county line, was built in 1939. Over time, however, its galvanized, ground-anchored, parallel-wire cables were at risk from

ground moisture. In 1995, the Texas Legislature mandated repair of the bridge.

To protect the historic structure and those who use it, engineers focused on preserving the appearance of the main span while eliminating details that could lead to bridge failure. Also, requirements were waived for added width and railing while replacing the suspension cable anchorages.

Listed in the Texas Historic Engineering Site Inventory and the National Register of Historic Places, the bridge is one of two historic suspension bridges still open to vehicle traffic in Texas. ★

Wealth of awards honor department and its employees

TxDOT and its people, along with partners at times, received a wide variety of other awards and recognitions in 2002. Among them are the following:

- American Road and Transportation Builders Association Globe Award — Pharr District, Queen Isabella Causeway Reconstruction Project.
- Aon Corp. Build America Award — Williams Brothers Construction Co. and TxDOT Pharr District, Queen Isabella Causeway.
- Marvin M. Black Excellence in Partnering Award — Williams Brothers Construction Co. and TxDOT Pharr District, Queen Isabella Causeway.
- National Partnership for Highway Quality Risk — Taking Category, Silver Level — Pharr District and Williams Brother Construction Co., Queen Isabella Causeway Project.
- National Partnership for Highway Quality Breaking the Mold Category — TxDOT General Services Division, plans online.
- Western Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials Quality Support Fund Program — Lubbock District, Strategy 144 Distribution Team.
- Western Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials Quality Support Fund Program — Contract Services Office, Elimination of Contract Attachments Team.
- Western Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials Quality Support Fund Program — Edward C. Brook, Paris District.
- Journey Toward Excellence, Individual Award winner — Edward C. Brook, Paris District Environmental Specialist V.
- Journey Toward Excellence Work Group/Team Award winner — Contract Services Office, Elimination of Contract Attachments Team.

■ See TxDOT, Page 30

Division promotes safety campaign at work

TxDOT's lost-time injury rate for last year is an all-time low for the department, according to agency safety officials.

For each of the past four years during the four-month period ending Aug. 31, TxDOT's Occupational Safety Division has sponsored a safety awareness campaign called the 123 Safe Days of Summer. While promoting awareness, the program reduces injuries at work and vehicle-collision accidents during TxDOT's busiest time of the year.

As a part of the 123 Safe Days effort, the division holds a contest to promote the greatest reduction in

injuries at work and in vehicle accidents. The award in each category is presented based on total safety performance.

The Odessa District received the award this year for the best safety-performance rating as it worked to eliminate vehicle collisions and other vehicle-related safety incidents. Safety coordinator: **Clemente Villa**.

The Yoakum District received the award this year for the reduction of occupational injuries and for achieving the best safety-performance rating in working to eliminate injuries at work. Safety coordinator: **Diane Havlik**.

This year the Yoakum District came in for some added recognition as

employees there distinguished themselves by working an entire year without a lost-time injury.

Safety officials say that any injury on the job is not good, but lost-time injuries are of special concern. Such injuries, they say, are typically more severe and may result in an employee not able to work or go about normal activities. Officials measure lost-time injuries two ways: incidents (the number of times accidents occur) and severity (the number of lost work days).

Safety officials credit the "hard work, dedication, and commitment" of TxDOT employees for the drop in lost-time injuries. ★

TxDOT, its people and partners receive wealth of awards

Continued from Page 29

- Journey Toward Excellence Work Group/Team Award winner — Lubbock District, Littlefield Area, Strategy 144 Budget Distribution Team.
- The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) presented an award to TxDOT for efforts raising the state's seat belt usage to more than 80 percent during the "Click It or Ticket" Texas campaign in late May and early June. NHTSA Regional Administrator Georgia S. Chakiris presented the award Sept. 19 at the "Buckle Up Texas Summit" in Austin. "Raising the state's seat belt usage from 76.1 percent in 2001 to the current 81.1 percent is a major step forward in traffic safety for the state. It is the largest one-year increase for Texas since the year the seat belt law went into effect," she said. Use of seat belts, she said, saves lives, prevents injuries, and results in economic savings. The most recent "Click It or Ticket" campaign in Texas was conducted Nov. 24 – Dec. 1.
- **Karen Lewis** has been selected to participate in the 2003 Leadership Texas program. A purchasing supervisor for the Services Purchasing Group, Lewis works in the Purchasing and Equipment Section of the General Services Division. Her primary job duties are to assist customers in the TxDOT districts, divisions and offices in purchasing needed services. She has been a TxDOT employee for more than nine years. The Foundation for Women's Resources sponsors Leadership Texas and focuses on outstanding women employees who are leaders in their communities and profession. The vision of Leadership Texas is to "provide women leaders with essential information, an awareness of ongoing changes, sharpened skills, and the initiative when necessary, to rewrite the rules." TxDOT will pay the tuition and travel expenses for Lewis to attend the program's five sessions conducted around the state beginning in February 2003.
- **Michael R. Murphy, Ph.D., P.E.**, was recognized for his service as chair of the Technical Advisory Panel for Research Management Committee 1 from 1993 to 2002. The committee presented the award at its fall meeting in San Antonio and noted Murphy's "continuous leadership, unparalleled fervor and dedicated service."
- **Moon Won, Ph.D., P.E.**, received the M.D. Shelby Award in April from the Center for Transportation Research at the University of Texas at Austin for his outstanding excellence as project director for research relating to the study of alkali silica reactivity and delayed ettringite formation.
- **Amitis Meshkani** received the award for best thesis from the College of Science & Engineering, The University of Texas at El Paso.
- "Project 4240, Development of Guidelines and Procedures for Stabilization of Sulfate Soils," received the Top Innovation Award for 2002 at the Transportation Short Course in October. **Mike Arellano** and **Claudia Izzo** (both with the Geotechnical, Soils and Aggregates Branch of the Construction Division's Materials and Pavements Section) were cited for their many contributions as members of the research team.
- The TxDOT Design Division this year presented its Commitment to Excellence in Design Award to the following TxDOT districts: Wichita Falls (rural district), Bryan (urban district), Fort Worth (metro district).
- TxDOT received the 2002 Corporate Diversity Award from the Capital City African-American Chamber of Commerce. This award recognizes the number and value of contracts awarded to African-Americans or businesses owned by African-Americans. In 2001, TxDOT spent \$400 million with minority suppliers and \$23 million was spent with African-American businesses. ★



To: TxDOT, Odessa District
From: Athol Atkins, Midland, TX

This is to thank you for there being some "public servant" out there who really is looking out for some of us who occasionally lose our billfolds.

This has gone a long way in restoring my faith in prayer and the department of transportation.

Thanks to **Pete Trevino** for returning the billfold with \$200 and to **Russ Tidwell**, who went to a good bit of trouble to contact me.

(Editor's note: Pete Trevino and Russ Tidwell work in the Midland Maintenance Section of the Odessa District.)

To: TxDOT, Amarillo District
From: Alfred and Nancy Spencer, Albuquerque, NM

We were traveling from Amarillo to New Mexico on Interstate 40 when one of our tires blew out. We were attempting to change the tire when a TxDOT truck pulled up on the frontage road. The driver, **Lewis Miller**, came over and offered to change the tire for us. Upon completion, we offered to pay him for his help, but he refused the money. He showed deep concern for our safety. He was very competent and courteous. We certainly appreciate his kindness and concern.

(Editor's note: Lewis Miller is a maintenance technician in the Moore County Maintenance Section, Amarillo District.)

To: TxDOT, Lubbock District
From: James D. Brashear, M.D., Austin, TX

We had a blowout on U.S. 84 between Littlefield and Sudan. Within five minutes, three Department of Transportation workers stopped, changed our tire, and got us on our way.

Our thanks to Rusty, Rick and David of the Littlefield Office for such kind and generous help to us. They were great!

(Editor's note: Working from the Littlefield maintenance office, Rusty Smith is a maintenance technician, Rick Walbrick is assistant maintenance supervisor, and David Barrera is maintenance supervisor.)

To: TxDOT, Odessa District
From: Leon and Anna Wagley, Las Cruces, NM

I want to thank you (**John Tijerina**) for assisting us with a tire blowout on our Airstream trailer. You were so thoughtful. I never knew Texas was so very concerned about through traffic.

You certainly are to be commended for this service. We thank you and your department of transportation for getting us out of a lot of trouble.

(Editor's note: John Tijerina works in the Odessa Maintenance Section of the Odessa District.)

To: TxDOT, Waco District
From: Jerry Penny, Keller, TX

It was late on a Friday. Traffic was heavy and I was pulling a fifth-wheel trailer. Headed south on I-35, I had almost cleared the construction zone around Exit 339 when I had a flat tire on my trailer. It took all I could do to get it safely off the road.

I was stranded and had no way to ... fix the tire. It was very hot and I knew I was in trouble. It would be at least an hour before anyone could get out to help me and it would cost at least \$100 — if I was lucky.

Well, I no sooner looked up [when] here ... came the two white knights. I hadn't been stopped more than five minutes. These gentlemen stopped and asked if I needed help.

They got out of the truck, grabbed a jack, had the tire changed, and put the flat tire back on where the spare was in under five minutes. I couldn't believe my eyes.

I can't tell you how much that meant to me. I was on my way from Keller to Mart to do a prison ministry. I was going to be late and wasn't sure how I was going to contact anyone for help. It was truly a godsend that they appeared.

I know it is their job, but I just wanted to recognize these men and tell you how grateful I am for their help. May God bless them as much as he has blessed me.

(Editor's note: Keith Crawford and Donald Hampton responded to the need for assistance. Both are transportation maintenance technicians in the McLennan County Maintenance Section of the Waco District.)



Service Awards — November 2002

Abilene District

25 years
Allen R. Morgan, Jr.
Raul Rodriguez
10 years
Jerry D. Jeffries
5 years
Gregory R. Cotton
Kyle D. Lacey
David Moreno

Amarillo District

35 years
Don F. Reck
25 years
Robert L. Smith
20 years
Ronnie D. Powell
10 years
Ruben Alvarez
Winston R. Kelly Jr.
5 years
David S. Swaringen
Joe E. Watts

Atlanta District

25 years
Gordon E. Haynes
Troy L. Johnson
20 years
Mark S. Sarubbi
5 years
Kelli A. Speer

Austin District

20 years
Robert H. Norment
Wayne L. Rehnborg
10 years
Gary E. Parson
Ray W. Wichmann
5 years
Isaac R. Acosta
Rose M. Beck
Phillip R. Grona
Brad H. Phipps
Rose E. Stephens

Beaumont District

25 years
Yolanda M. Roberts
20 years
Dennis A. McGregor
5 years
Alfred L. Brown Jr.
Horace S. Estes
Billie J. Mays Jr.

Brownwood District

10 years
Joseph L. Payne
5 years
Keith D. Stuart

Bryan District

10 years
James M. Burleson
Karl R. Nelson
5 years
William W. Spiller
Childress District
20 years
Barry L. Atkinson
15 years
Darwin L. Lankford
5 years
Roy D. Bertrand
Monte L. Elliott
Glen M. Gerhardt
Joe L. Ramirez
Howard Weatherston

Corpus Christi District

20 years
Felipe J. Rodriguez
Janan N. Sahtout Lee
Connie S. Waters
Jack J. Wiginton
5 years
Felix C. Lopez

Dallas District

25 years
Brian E. Gregory
20 years
Mark A. Eder
John E. Marley
15 years
Timothy B. Prasifka
10 years
Kelvin L. Ballard
Jimmy D. Bertoldo
John D. Brewer
Rhonda R. Carrington
Joanna Jones
Bruce W. Nolley
Ide E. Udabor
Jacqueline M. Weeks
5 years
James E. Atkins II
James S. Fant
Edmond L. Jackson

El Paso District

25 years
Steven C. Scown
10 years
Robbie A. Burns
5 years
James E. Evans
Harold L. Gibson

Fort Worth District

20 years
Barry L. Haley
15 years
Bobby J. Etheredge
10 years
Thomas C. Ginest
Arthur D. Jackson
Jamy L. Sawey
5 years
Ernest F. Gass
Thomas N. Hite

Houston District

25 years
Henry L. Jones
20 years
Stanley G. Kinerd
15 years
Louis P. Breaux Jr.
Richard D. Escamilla
Joseph A. Stanley
Samuel M. Walden
Ivor E. Walker
5 years
Edwin W. Gardenhire
Linda G. Hall
James T. Nowlin

Laredo District

20 years
Teodoro A. Tenorio
15 years
Carlos G. Rodriguez
Rosa E. Trevino
10 years
Ramon J. Rodriguez
5 years
Alejandro S. Gonzales
Lilia I. Pena
Fidel Quiroz

Lubbock District

25 years
Alpha H. Cox
Gerald R. Sturdivant
20 years
Jimmy D. Gilbert
10 years
Terry L. Crutcher
Shannon J. Huckabee
Rukne F. Kawaja
Joe L. Macias
David W. Mullins
5 years
Kevin S. McCuiston

Lufkin District

25 years
James W. Dixon
James E. Wood
15 years
William H. Hodges
10 years
Christopher S. McFarland
Leonard McGowen Jr.
5 years
Robert H. Holcomb
Jimmie A. Johnson
Ralinda L. Wagner

Odessa District

5 years
Miguel A. Gonzales
Louis B. Lara

Paris District

35 years
Ronnie W. Perry
25 years
James M. Gaby
15 years
Stephen N. May

Pharr District

15 years
Juan M. Barrientos
Pedro Pena Jr.
5 years
Juan R. Guerra
Michael G. Quintanilla
Agustin Ramirez
Juan P. Rodriguez

San Angelo District

5 years
Gregory S. Mills

San Antonio District

20 years
Julia M. Brown
Cathy T. Oatman
Daniel S. Silva
15 years
Jerome D. Pavliska
David R. Smith
10 years
Debra S. Menchaca
Wilbert W. Moore
5 years
Martin W. Bordovsky
Clara Carbajal
Glen J. Henry
Jason M. Meyer
Richard J. Reyes
Ishmael C. Trevino

Tyler District

25 years
Cathy L. McCurley
15 years
Harlan A. Bollman
10 years
Stephen S. Mitchell
5 years
Micheal D. Baker
Lupe S. Cruz Jr.
Benny S. Steen
Randy C. York

Waco District

20 years
Raymond E. Ethridge
10 years
Lavonza A. Barkouskie
5 years
John D. Moravec
Francisca Villarreal

Wichita Falls District

30 years
David C. Heim
5 years
Jerry D. Jackson
Joe D. Moore

Yoakum District

45 years
Lynn R. Mauldin
5 years
Mark A. Wenske

Bridge Division

20 years
Bruce T. Sims
15 years
Ronald D. Medlock
Jon T. Ries
Leon D. Wegele
Lloyd M. Wolf

Construction Division

25 years
Thomas F. Ritter
20 years
John W. Bassett
5 years
Eduardo Arredondo

Environmental Affairs Division

15 years
Jean M. Beeman
5 years
Douglass J. MacK

Finance Division

10 years
Rodrigo Castilleja
Doris L. Knight

General Services Division

20 years
Harry M. Bird
15 years
Karen L. Dennis
Monty L. Harris
Dick B. Rollins
10 years
Lawrence G. Bloom
5 years
Sandra R. Coomes

Human Resources Division

15 years
Alice B. Stroman
10 years
Marilyn J. Dell
Norma L. Nanez

Information Systems Division

20 years
John P. Hancock
5 years
Dwight D. Adams
Charles A. Meyer
Carolyn M. Mora

Occupational Safety Division

10 years
Susan L. Fitzharris

Transportation Planning and Programming Division

15 years
Dawn A. Doyle-Jordan

Travel Division

15 years
Ola J. Harper

Vehicle Titles and Registration Division

25 years
Janis G. Eddleman
10 years
Sara C. Bodden
Vivian C. Howard
Yolanda A. Johnson
5 years
John W. Carney
Maria C. Flores

Abilene District

30 years
James C. McFadden
Bernice M. Turentine

25 years
Mike D. Poteet
Jimmy D. Smith

10 years
Clifton P. Hallford
Shelly J. Pierce

5 years
Jesse Camacho
Jerry M. Conner
Vicki B. Fuller
Dustin C. Ogle

Amarillo District

25 years
Gerald D. Britten

20 years
Iva S. Davis
Robert D. Hollingsworth
Michael L. Stavenhagen

5 years
Cole D. Baggett

Austin District

25 years
James R. Dildine

15 years
Bobby J. Doherty Jr.
Michael H. McKissick
Larry W. Stephens

10 years
James E. Drake
John N. Hurt
Terry D. Schulze

5 years
Rosalinda Gamez

Atlanta District

15 years
James H. Green
Lonzo D. Griffin

10 years
John H. Hudson

Beaumont District

25 years
Alan L. Majors

20 years
Stephen E. Patin

10 years
Donald L. Dozier
Dianna M. Hanks
Jody C. Pitman

5 years
Gerard G. Clark

Bryan District

15 years
Jerry Ritter

10 years
Jose C. Chavez
Ricky L. King

5 years
James M. Martin Jr.
Jianhua Zhu

Brownwood District

10 years
David G. Delgado
Joe F. Martinez
Meleisa B. Myrick
Gilbert B. Ramon
Kimberley H. Rutherford
Alan S. Thomas

5 years
Gail L. Weeks

Childress District

20 years
Bettie W. Valenzuela

10 years
Gene L. Ward

5 years
Randy R. Arnn
Charles R. Flemmons
Thomas H. Holcomb
Joel Martinez

Corpus Christi District

20 years
Israel A. Leiba
Manuel Reyes

15 years
Anthony F. Parlamas

5 years
Warren M. Woelfel

Dallas District

30 years
Terry E. Sams

25 years
Neil R. Brown
James R. Hitchcock

20 years
Jack M. Justice
Keith D. Nabors

15 years
Wanda P. Prock
Vernon D. Raney

20 years
Oscar R. Serrano

15 years
Connie Y. Prior

10 years
Roy L. Bradford
Robert F. Hubbard III

5 years
Gary F. Haley
Arnold C. Harris

10 years
David L. Hady
Sidney J. Hibbitt Jr.
James T. McKinnon

El Paso District

20 years
James Bell

15 years
Alfredo A. Covarrubias

10 years
Isabel J. Alarcon
Rafael M. Delgado

10 years
Roberto Frausto
Ismael Hernandez

5 years
Andres J. Pacheco

5 years
Alfredo P. Sanchez

Fort Worth District

25 years
David L. Webb

15 years
Douglas M. Elston
Glen E. Martin

10 years
David A. Neeley

10 years
Carolyn S. McLendon
Nelson J. Wellspeak

5 years
John E. Baxter
Christen S. Phillips

5 years
Alireza M. Shafiey
Jack L. Shearman

Houston District

30 years
Bobbie E. Bridges

25 years
Larry R. Turner

20 years
David E. Gulling
William S. Stewart

15 years
Raul F. Bartholomew
Matthew A. Evans

10 years
Eliza C. Paul
Jeff A. Volk

10 years
Jack C. Weinberg

5 years
Pleshette B. Drummond

5 years
Grant Chm
Yu-lin Fan

5 years
Richard O. Goodwin
Pamela M. Martinez

Laredo District

25 years
Luis A. Ramirez

20 years
Gregory C. Howard

10 years
Feliciano Colecio

5 years
Pablo Resendez

Lubbock District

30 years
Clarence J. Brackens

25 years
Santos E. Torres

20 years
James R. Grace

15 years
Federico Gonzales

10 years
Bernardo D. Blanco
Andrew Chavez

10 years
Stephen A. Enriquez
Freddy Perez

5 years
Pete Aguilar Jr.
Edward R. Goebel

5 years
Linda S. King
Ronnie Rivas

5 years
Francis Romanofski
Kelley W. Stewart

5 years
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Kelley W. Stewart

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Paris District

15 years
Bernie L. Holder

10 years
Mary J. Phillips

5 years
Vickie L. Coplin
Daniel C. Jacks

5 years
Vickie L. Coplin
Daniel C. Jacks

Pharr District

20 years
Jose R. Solis

15 years
Jaime Cruz
Obed H. Montoya

10 years
Alfredo Alaniz Jr.
Ramon Navarro IV

10 years
Jose N. Pena
Miguel J. Rodarte

5 years
Juan R. Guerra
Jennie M. Pedraza

5 years
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Jennie M. Pedraza

Wichita Falls District

10 years
Darell E. Johnson

5 years
Graham W. Eudey

5 years
Graham W. Eudey

5 years
Graham W. Eudey

Yoakum District

5 years
Kenneth W. Kocurek

5 years
Kenneth W. Kocurek

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Kenneth W. Kocurek

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Kenneth W. Kocurek

Motor Vehicle

Division

10 years

Jennifer K. Murdock

Public Transportation

Division

10 years

Ginnie R. Grayson

Research and

Technology

Implementation

Office

30 years

Paul E. Krugler

15 years

Charmaine Richardson

Right of Way Division

30 years

Gerald D. Brown

Traffic Operations

Division

15 years

Shelli D. Belser

10 years

Georgene A. Black

Transportation

Planning and

Programming Division

10 years

Richard L. Camp

Travel Division

20 years

Cynthia M. Kosel

15 years

William D. Blanton

10 years

Michael A. Murphy

5 years

Cheryl M. Granger

Fawn E. Kennedy

Vehicle Titles and

Registration Division

30 years

Linda P. Sheldon

25 years

Frankie C. Shilow

15 years

Jimmy A. Goolsby

5 years

Leann J. Lapp

Hedy C. Lee



Retirees

August 2002

Lubbock District

John M. Wilson
Maintenance Section
Assistant
34 Years

Jill C. Henry
Accounting Specialist
28 Years

Paris District

Thomas L. Irvin
Transportation Maintenance
Technician
38 Years

September 2002

Austin District

Donald G. Gall
Engineering Technician
32 Years

James S. Tate
Maintenance Supervisor
23 Years

Beaumont District

Gary L. Giblin
Engineering Technician
26 Years

Childress District

Dannie B. Tiffin
Technical Engineer
29 Years

Fort Worth District

Alton G. New
Engineering Technician
17 Years

Houston District

Matthew K. Stevens
Transportation Maintenance
Specialist
15 Years

Lubbock District

Carroll J. Sims
Engineering Technician
13 Years

Barbara S. Green
Administrative Technician
9 Years

Paris District

Willie D. Booker
Transportation Maintenance
Technician
37 Years

San Antonio District

Darryl A. Schneider
Engineering Technician
32 Years

General Services Division

Rudy Gomez
Program Administrator
16 Years

October 2002

Atlanta District

Jerry L. Yates
Engineering Specialist
40 Years

Beaumont District

James R. Daigle
Maintenance Supervisor
5 Years

Brownwood District

W.K. Spencer
Transportation Maintenance
Specialist
34 Years

Bryan District

Billie J. Simmons
Engineering Technician
23 Years

Childress District

Bluford D. Booth
Transportation Maintenance
Specialist
18 Years

Houston District

Eufemio S. Guerra Sr.
Engineering Technician
16 Years

Matthew A. Evans
Engineering Technician
15 Years

San Antonio District

Larry J. Dockal
Engineering Maintenance
Specialist
23 Years

John T. White
Engineering Technician
18 Years

Waco District

Glenn B. Drake
Maintenance Section
Supervisor
35 Years

Robert A. Tealer
Transportation Maintenance
Technician
16 Years

Yoakum District

Emmitt E. Currie
Engineering Technician
32 Years

Wilbert B. Frank Jr.
Maintenance Technician
26 Years

James L. Crawford
Engineering Technician
23 Years

Aviation Division

Susan Page
Information Specialist
13 Years

Bridge Division

David W. McDonnold, PE.
Director
30 Years

Finance Division

Janie A. Lehman
Accounting Specialist
25 Years

Information Systems Division

Gary Bruce Perrenot
Systems Analyst
25 Years

Transportation Planning and Programming Division

Sue Worsley
Executive Assistant
9 Years

Travel Division

Milton D. Meharg
Manager
28 Years

Vehicle Titles and Registration Division

Tula H. Taylor
Program Administrator
30 Years

Darlene Foster
Administrative Technician
26 Years

November 2002

Abilene District

Bruce E. Sanders
Engineering Technician
25 Years

Dallas District

Billy T. Willingham
Maintenance Supervisor
31 Years

Paul E. Duvall
Environmental Specialist
24 Years

El Paso District

Jose M. Lagos
Engineering Technician
36 Years

Fort Worth District

Thomas J. Jackson
Engineering Technician
26 Years

Houston District

Rita K. Lee
Systems Analyst
32 Years

Billy J. Beavers
Engineering Specialist
31 Years

Joseph E. Stanley Jr.
Engineering Technician
14 Years

Paris District

Don H. Eudy
Maintenance Section
Supervisor
39 Years

San Angelo District

Frank C. Bates Jr.
Engineering Technician
25 Years

Waco District

Tommy Pechacek
Transportation Maintenance
Specialist
29 Years

Letter from the editor

Continued from Page 2

expanded issue, but we'll get to them down the road. And keep the ideas coming!

On a considerably less uplifting note, according to the Human Resources Department, the Employees Retirement System (ERS) has stopped distribution of its monthly list of retiree deaths.

At press time, we were looking into this situation to see if there is anything we can do to continue to be able

to list former TxDOT employees who have passed away. In the meantime, as a short-term solution, if you hear of someone's death, please send us a copy of his or her obituary so we can make note of it.

Next month, we'll be taking a look at the upcoming 78th Legislature and the various issues our lawmakers will consider that are of interest to this agency.

Until then, happy holidays.

— Mike Cox

Awards honor research directors

The TxDOT Research and Technology Implementation Office has recognized five employees as outstanding project directors. The winners:

Carl Bertrand, Construction Division, "Efforts in Pavements Research;" Judy Friesenhahn, San Antonio District, "Efforts in Transportation Planning Research;" Daniel Brown, Childress District, "Efforts in Geometric Design and Safety Research;" Roy Parikh, Fort Worth District, "Efforts in Traffic Operations Research;" and Brian Merrill, Bridge Division, "Efforts in Structures Research."

Each recipient was chosen by the chairperson of each of five research-management committees based on nominations received from the committee's members.

IN MEMORIAM

Abilene District

Clint Kent
Maintenance Construction
Supervisor
retired 1974
died April 14, 2002

Amarillo District

George T. Brewster
Maintenance Technician
retired 1982
died July 26, 2002

Patricia A. Hartman
Accounting Clerk
retired 1983
died August 26, 2002

Roy L. Neeley
Engineering Technician
retired 1983
died June 28, 2002

Atlanta District

Roy D. Adcock
Material Analyst
retired 1987
died August 25, 2002

Billy G. Knight
Roadway Maintenance
Supervisor
retired 1990
died July 7, 2002

Coy Lynch
Engineering Technician
retired 1988
died August 1, 2002

Austin District

Carl W. Hill
Engineering Technician
retired 1983
died August 22, 2002

Beaumont District

James H. McMahon Jr.
Shop Foreman
retired 1974
died June 30, 2002

Joseph V. Thomas Sr.
Maintain Technician
retired 1991
died June 5, 2002

Thomas J. West
Maintenance Technician
retired 1987
died July 4, 2002

Dallas District

Thomas S. Dunn
Maintenance Technician
retired 1976
died August 20, 2002

William D. Edwards
Engineering Specialist
retired 2001
died August 1, 2002

Houston District

Gene O. Day
Maintenance Technician
retired 1994
died August 26, 2002

Laredo District

Domingo Perez
Engineering Technician
retired 1998
died August 1, 2002

Lubbock District

Santos G. Urive
Engineering Technician
retired 2000
died July 24, 2002

Lufkin District

Cecil J. Frost, Sr.
Engineering Technician
retired 1993
died November 12, 2002

Paris District

Elgin Fowler Jr.
Engineering Technician
retired 1985
died June 15, 2002

Stephen H. Gilliam, Jr.
Maintenance Technician
retired 1983
died August 12, 2002

Wyndell E. Russell
Engineering Technician
retired 1988
died August 30, 2002

Pharr District

Erasmus Ventura
Maintenance Technician
retired 1980
died August 10, 2002

Tyler District

Wilford Easley
Maintenance Technician
died November 9, 2002

William L. Henderson
Maintenance Technician
retired 1979
died July 28, 2002

Waco District

William R. Manor Jr.
Maintenance Technician
retired 1983
died August 25, 2002

Yoakum District

Alfred H. Holik
Mechanic
retired 1986
died September 29, 2002

Johnell Robinson Sr.
Motor Vehicle Technician
retired 2000
died June 3, 2002

Finance Division

Walter C. Jones
Engineering Technician
retired 1987
died August 4, 2002

Information Systems Division

Elbert Donsbach
Systems Analyst
retired 1987
died August 6, 2002

Lindsey F. Hobbs
Reproduction Equipment
Supervisor
retired 1986
died August 13, 2002

Vehicle Titles and Registration Division

Bettie S. Norment
Accounts Examiner
retired 1986
died August 18, 2002

LAST CHANCE TO RENEW

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backtracks solution



Congratulations to TxDOT retiree **James (Jim) E. Grady**, who identified last month's mystery photo as a portion of a bridge north of Wichita Falls washed out by a flood on the Red River in 1936. A cable system was used until the bridge was repaired, an operation that took about 30 days. Buses were used to pick people up at either end, saving a detour of 100 miles. The bridge eventually was replaced by Interstate 44. Grady retired from the Waco District as a maintenance supervisor in 1987.

backtracks



Obviously, this was a drought-buster somewhere. If you know where this photo was taken please call Quevarra Moten at (512) 463-6397 or e-mail qmoten@dot.state.tx.us.

Calendar



2002

DECEMBER

- 12-13** TxDOT/CCPC Concrete Paving Conference, Austin, CST
19 Commission Meeting, Austin
24 Christmas Eve Day (holiday)
25 Christmas Day (holiday)
26 Day after Christmas (holiday)

2003

JANUARY

- 1** New Year's Day (holiday)
20 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (holiday)
30 Commission Meeting, Tyler

FEBRUARY

- 11-13** Right of Way Administrator's Meeting, Austin, ROW
17 Presidents Day (holiday)
27 Commission Meeting, Austin

MARCH

- 6-7** 2003 Construction Conference, Waco, CST
19-21 Texas Aviation Conference, Austin, AVN
27 Commission Meeting, Austin
31 Cesar Chavez Day (optional holiday)

The complete TxDOT Calendar is on the intranet at <http://crossroads.org/pio/articles/calendar.htm>



Texas Department of Transportation



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